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ACE

MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR

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THE ACE CHALLENGE

The past, the present, and the future of games technology...

If your copy of The ACE Challenge is missing when you purchase the magazine, ask your newsagent for a replacement.

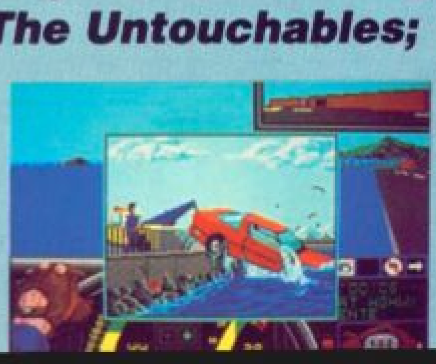
A PC ENGINE FOR BRITAIN

The secret's out! See page 27...

RED *hot* TAPE

US technology is transforming the humble video tape recorder into a fully interactive games system. Find out more on page 35...

Plus...the latest games, including *Vette* and *The Untouchables*; *David Braben* on *Elite 2*; and a *maniac's guide* to *16-bit racing sims*



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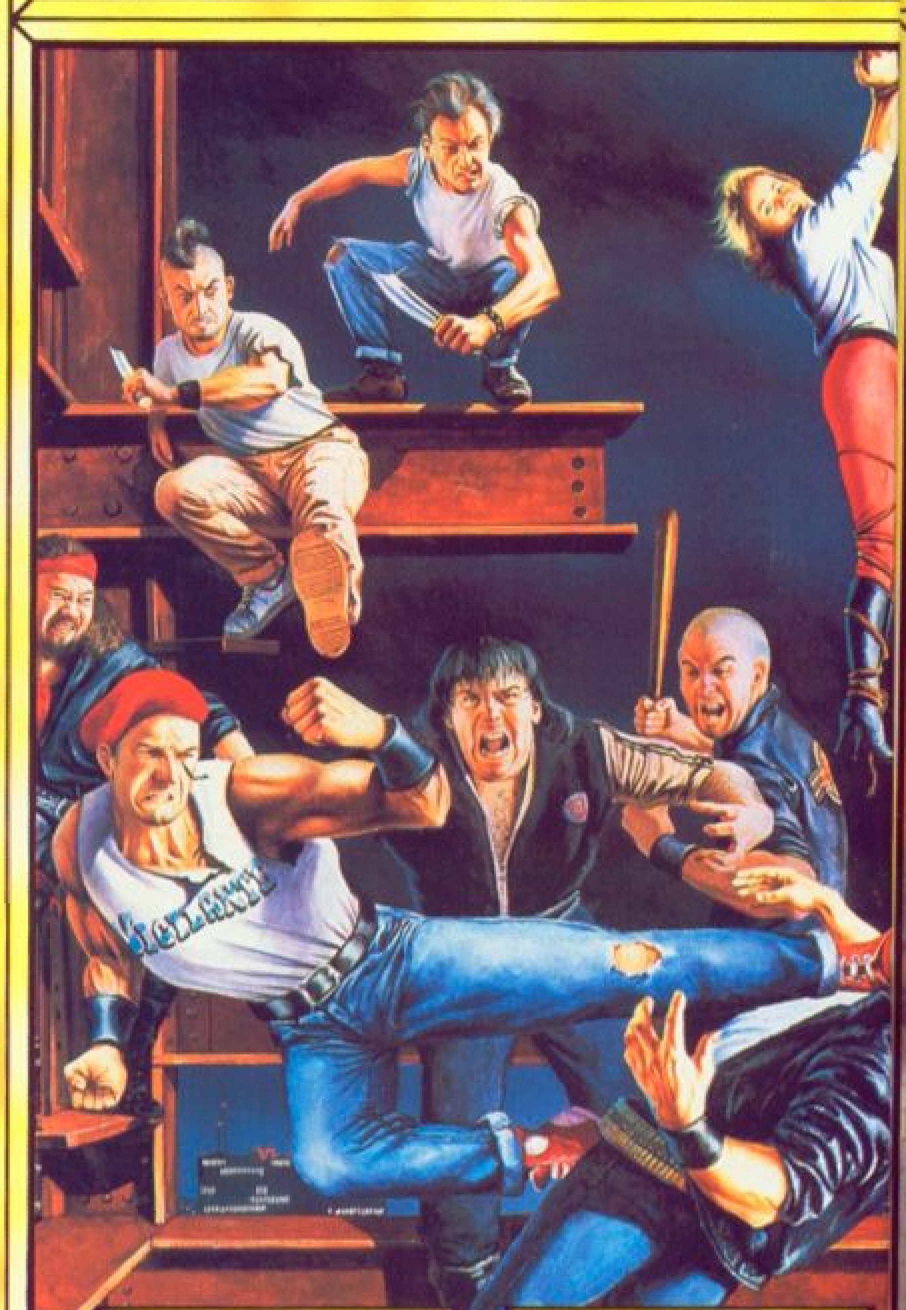

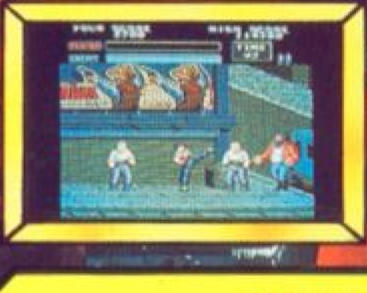

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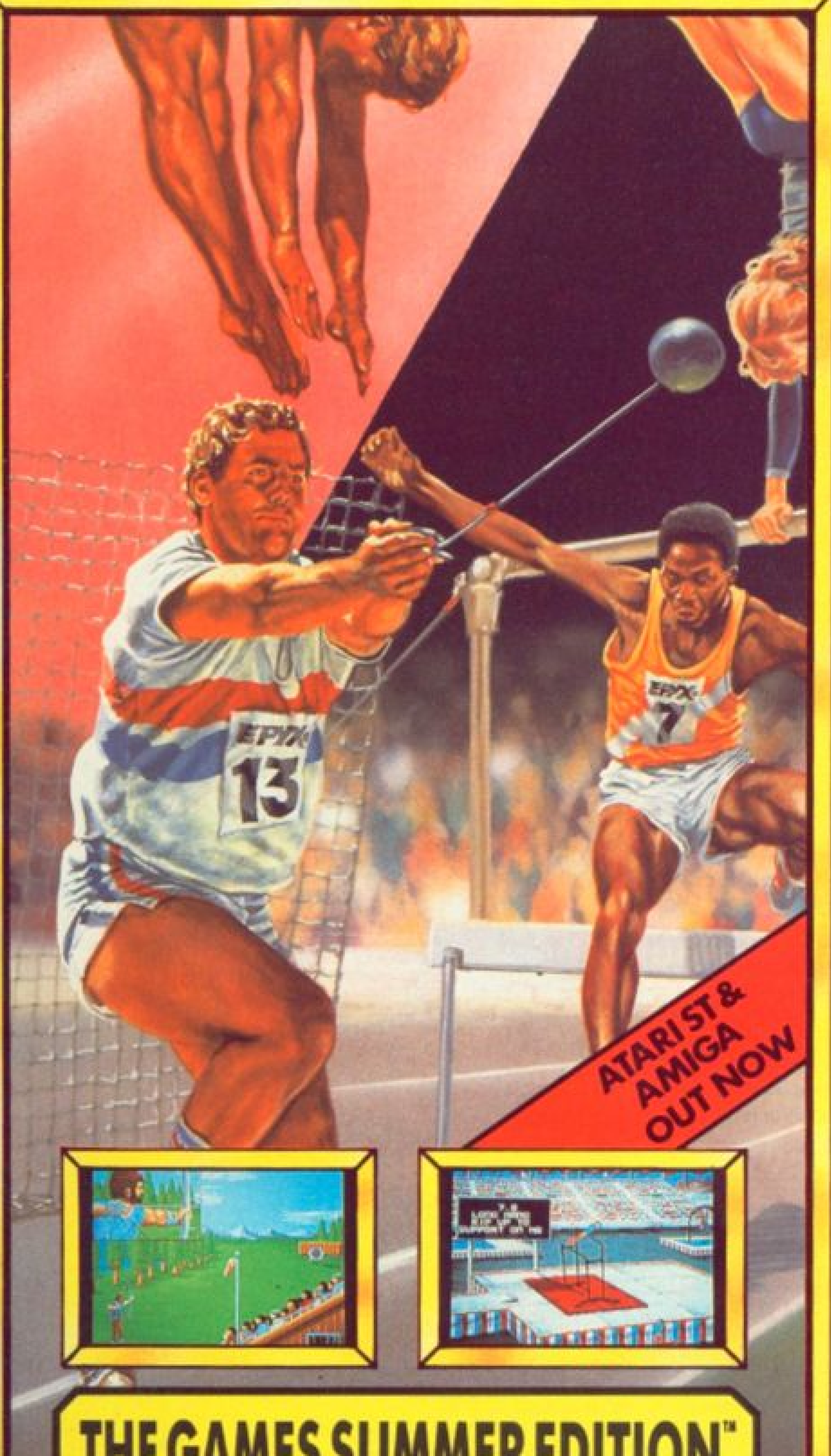
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While NEC dither, Konix delay, Sega stall, and Nintendo dally, a small British company has produced a proper PAL version of the infamous NEC PC Engine. It's unauthorised, unofficial, but available – and it works a lot better than any other unit we've seen to date, thanks to some careful re-engineering...

RED HOT TAPE 35

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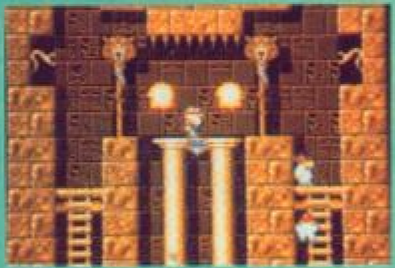
This month ACE introduces a dramatic new section that gives hitherto unavailable information about the games we play and the companies who produce them. Every month, you can turn to The Final Score section in the Pink Pages and discover:

- how ***every*** title reviewed that month by ***any*** reputable games magazine has scored overall;
- which **software houses** are currently at **the top of the games league**; and which games are **No. 1 for each machine.**
- PLUS how you can win some **great prizes!**



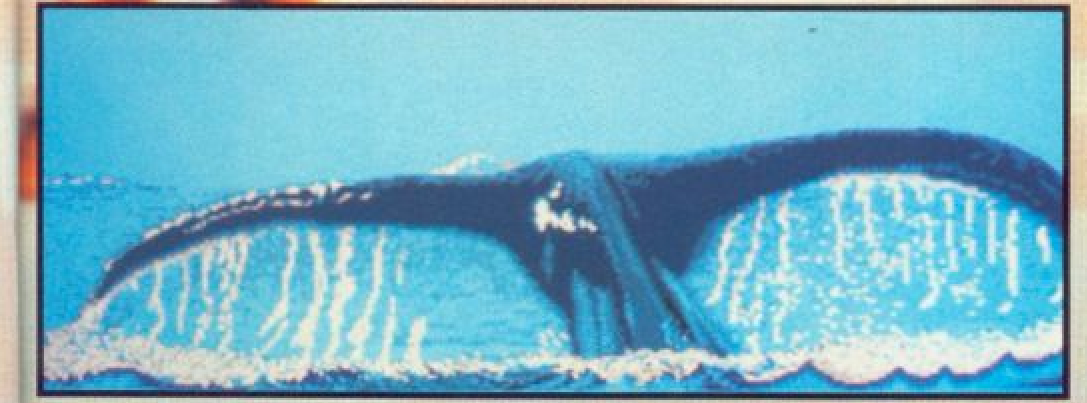
Rick Dangerous – Game of the month?

PSYGNOSIS

Psygnosis are offering five lucky Amiga/ST owners the chance

GAMEPLAY 2000

Right at this very moment in the City, huge fortunes are changing place not over oil, or transport, or gold, but over the rights (they're called 'intellectual property rights') to the great names in entertainment. If you have the right, for example, to exploit Michael Jackson's music, you're a very rich man indeed. But by the year 2000 all the conversion outlets for these rights will have been exhausted. You'll have seen the film, read the book, scratched the LP, lost the musicassette, bought the CD, and borrowed the video. There's only one other outlet left for the big boys to make money out of: computer games. And believe us, there are some very powerful people getting very excited right now about about computer entertainment. Watch this space...for the next twenty years.



RAINBOW WARRIOR – the most important launch of 1989?

SPECIAL!

to walk away with an armful of red hot software on p85.

GAMEPLAY

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ACE is the only magazine to bring you authoritative coverage of tomorrow's entertainment technology today – a subscription keeps you up-to-date and gets you a free issue into the bargain.

Hard

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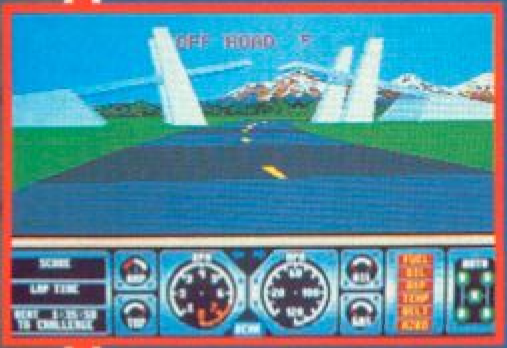
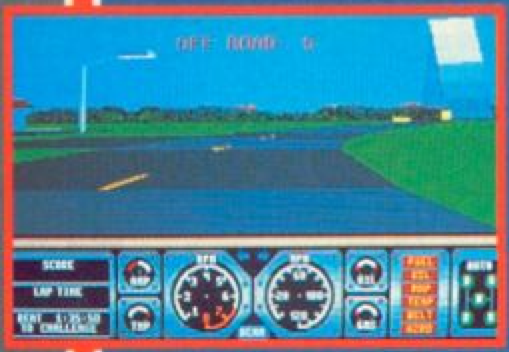


EXCITING STUNT TRACK WITH A 360-DEGREE LOOP!



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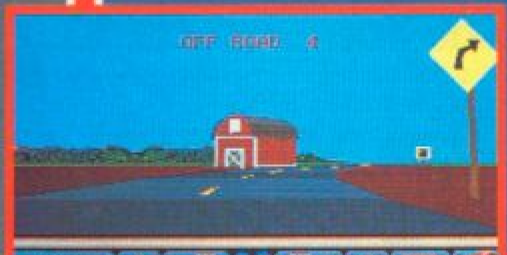

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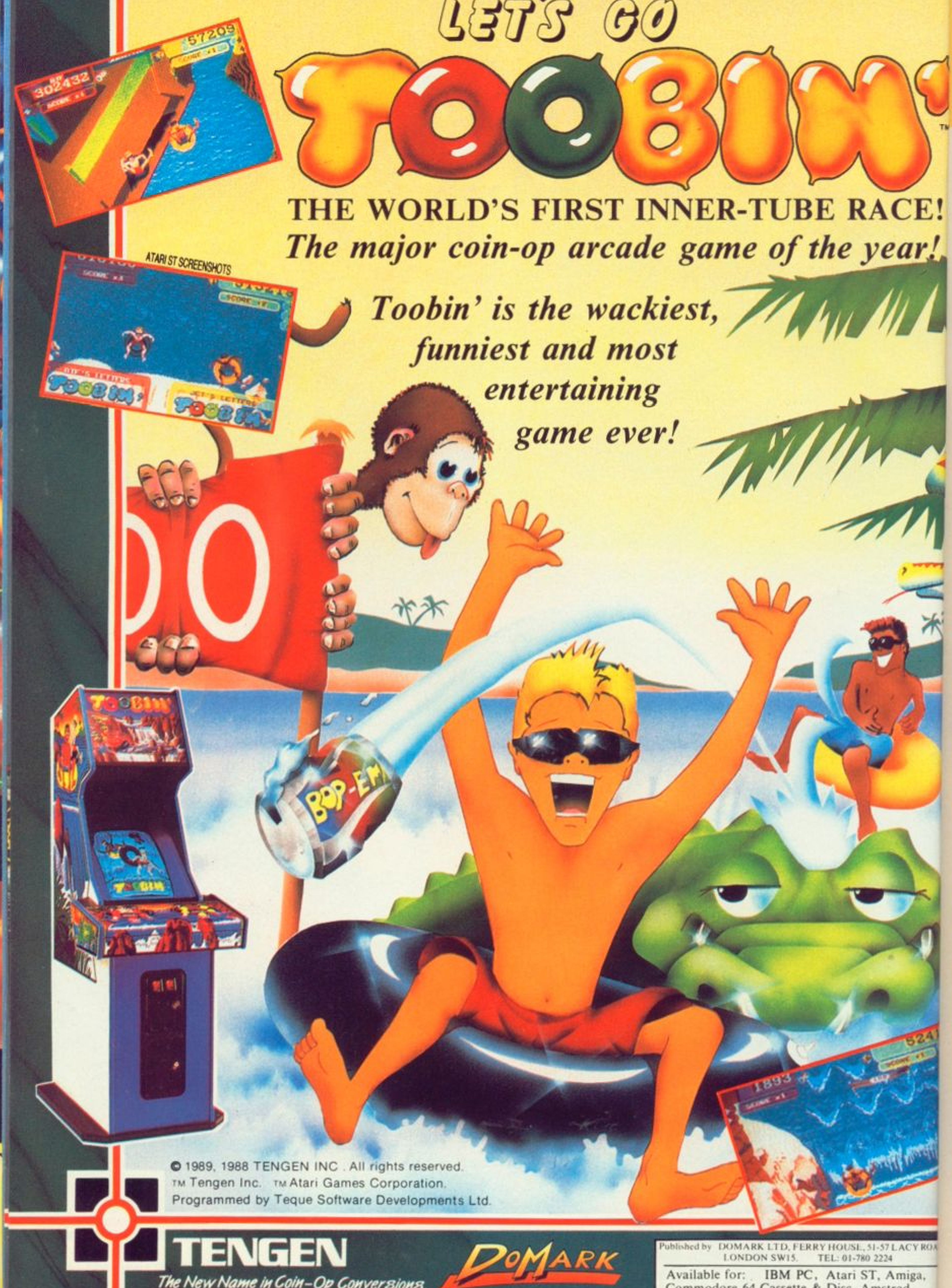

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SAM COMES OUT AT LAST!

Bruce Gordon and Alan Miles with the new SAM coupe computer.

MGT's long awaited SAM Coupe has finally appeared in its finished form. The machine was presented to the press in London on Tuesday 12th September by its creators Bruce Gordon and Alan Miles of Miles Gordon Technology.

SAM is unusual in being an 8-bit machine, while most of the machines (consoles excepted) launched over recent years have been based around 16-bit microprocessors. SAM uses the ever popular Z80B processor which runs at a tidy 6 megahertz. The choice of processor is not really surprising since one of SAM's main assets is its Spectrum compatibility.

Because the SAM should quite happily run most existing 48k Spectrum software, there is already a huge range of ready to run games available for the machine, making it a good upgrade path for existing Spectrum owners.

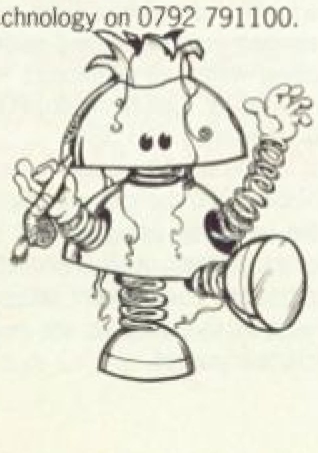
SAM also boasts a superior BASIC, written by Dr. Andy Wright, author of Beta BASIC, as well as 256k RAM upgradeable to 512K, and 6 channel, stereo sound. In addition to the standard Spectrum screen mode, SAM has three other modes, giving up to 512 x 192 pixel resolution in four colours from a palette of 128. There is also a lower resolution 256 x 192 pixel mode which allows 16 colours on screen at once.

The machine also supports a mouse, lightpen, and lightgun, parallel or serial printer, Midi, and one or two 3.5 inch disk drives, in addition to a standard cassette deck.

Judging by the specification we have seen, SAM is undoubtedly a very nice machine. It boasts better sound than the ST (not hard to achieve admittedly), and faster disk drives than both the ST or Amiga. But despite this the question still remains as to whether an 8-bit machine can compete in a market that is now dominated by more powerful 16-bit machines.

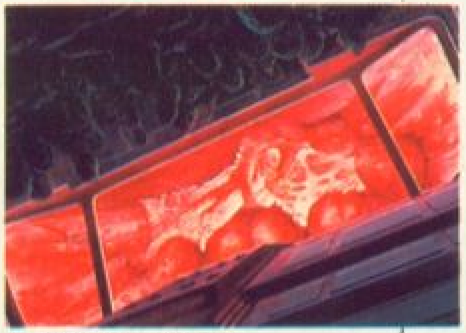
It is entirely possible that SAM will attract Spectrum owners who have yet to upgrade, but, in the long term, MGT will have to win the support of most of the major software developers if its smart new micro is to survive.

Further details from Miles Gordon Technology on 0792 791100.



SAM the cartoon character!

RIDE OF THE FUTURE



Artist's Impression

Innovative US company Walt Disney is utilising cutting edge computer graphic and simulator technologies in *Body Wars*, the latest attraction at the Walt Disney World theme park in Florida, USA. *Body Wars* is a collaboration between Walt Disney and Industrial Light and Magic – a division of Lucasfilm which created the special effects for the *Star Wars* and *Indiana Jones* trilogies, *Close Encounters of the Close Kind* and *ET*. The ride is an fantastic voyage-type journey through the immune system of the human body, using Disney's newly developed theater-simulator technology, where the whole audience experiences a real physical sensation from sitting in the cinema and watching the film.

AMIGA IS TV STAR IN DENMARK

Danish TV has come up with what must be the ultimate Amiga game. The game, *Oswald The Polar Berry* , casts you as a cute Polar bear. The object is to jump between ice blocks while avoiding birds, whales, and mean Eskimos. As well as avoiding the nasties you must try to collect as many packages as possible. The number of packages you collect affects your score at the finish line.

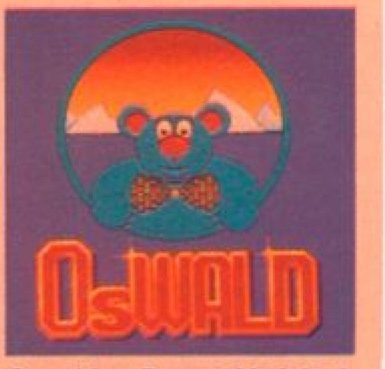
'So,' I hear you cry, 'what is so amazing about that?' Well, what makes *Oswald* a little different from the average Amiga game is that it is played on Saturday nights on National TV and viewed by thousands of people. Unlike most game shows, the players do not even have to be at the studio: the keypad on an ordinary push-button phone is used in place of the joystick. The computer at the television station interprets the tones sent by the players phone and converts them into movements. Obviously this won't work if you have a dial-phone (at any rate you'd have to be pretty quick with the index finger to manage with one)!

The prize you receive depends on the number of packages you manage to collect. Of course the real bonus for Danish Game addicts is the opportunity to have their skills admired by television viewers nationwide. Bad news for joystick wallies though...

As telecommunications and microcomputer technology become more sophisticated we are likely to see more applications of computer entertainment on a larger scale.

Television games like *Oswald the Polar Berry* and Multi-User Games like *MUD* and *Shades* are pointing the way towards more social computer entertainment than the present dominant modes.

It is entirely possible that the single gamer using his computer or console alone at home could soon become a thing of the past!



Oswald — Denmark's latest TV Star!

LOGOTRON WRIGHT OFF

Michael Heyward, the former Managing Director of Logotron, has bought the recreation division of the company. The new operation will go under the name Logotron Entertainment Limited but will be totally independent. The new company also has rights to the entire range of existing Logotron games. These include *Xor*, (one of the first games to receive an ACE 900+ rating), *Starray*, and more recently, *Archipelagos*.

Eight new titles are planned for the coming year, together with specific titles for the anticipated 16-bit console market.

Herbert Wright, who was formerly publisher of the Logotron range, will not be playing a rôle in the new company. Wright took over as publisher shortly after the launch of Logotron's first game, *Xor*, and has been largely responsible for its success in the 16-bit market, and for making headway in the tough American market.

Herbert is currently promoting the programming duo responsible for *Starray*, but he is keeping his long term plans closely guarded for the moment.

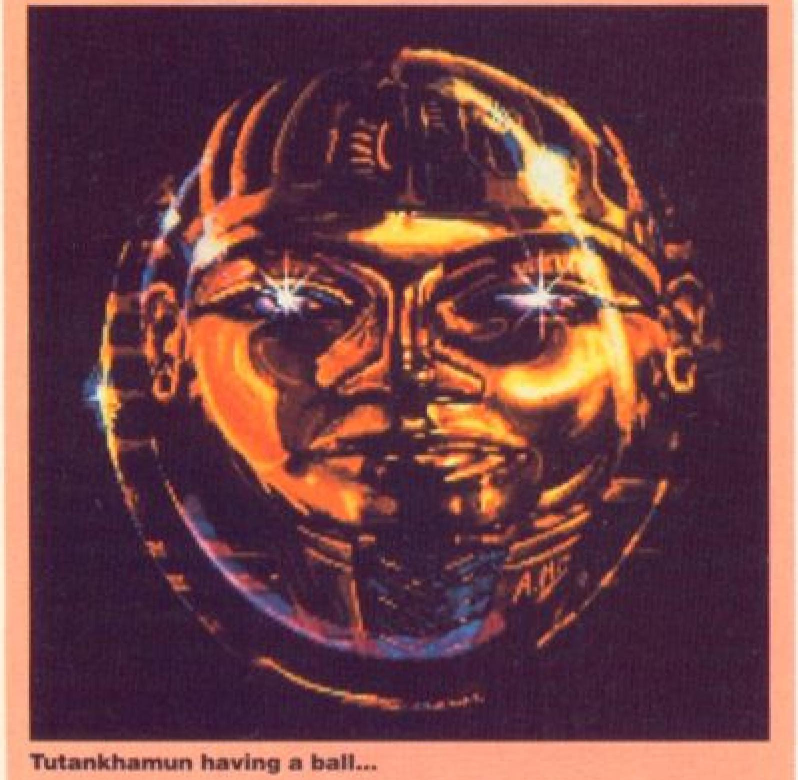
The education and business divisions of Logotron have been sold to the Longman Group, making them the largest educational software operation in Britain. The new group will be called, rather inventively we feel, Longman-Logotron, and will be marketing a product range made up from both companies lists.

THE CHALLENGE

By splitting away from their parent company, Logotron are bucking the trend for software houses to get larger and larger and less and less independent. Although it is becoming more difficult for small independent operations to survive in what has increasingly become a cutthroat industry, Logotron have proved a worthy contender for the big boys with XOR being one of the first 900+ ACE-rated titles.

Unfortunately there's no doubt that today's games are demanding more and more cash to get from the drawing board to the market. When CDI and other labour-intensive media become more popular, the costs could put the small publishers out of business altogether.

DELUXE PAINT II ENHANCED FOR PC OWNERS



Tutankhamun having a ball...

PC owners who use *DPaint II* from Electronic Arts can now upgrade to an enhanced version for £30. If you do not yet own a version of *Dpaint*, the enhanced version can be purchased for £99.99.

The enhanced features include Poster-sized printing, sculpted colour fonts, picture preview, a slide show routine, and new brush modes. All of the additions seem fairly cosmetic, so it might be better to try before you buy. Details from Electronic Arts on 0753 46465.

HELP AT LAST FOR NINTENDO ADDICTS

Are you a Nintendo Owner who just can't stay away from your machine? Do you suffer from severe attacks of frustration because you find it impossible to finish *Super Mario Bros*? Then help is at last at hand.

A Nintendo helpline has been set up by Club Nintendo. A 'trained and helpful Game Counsellor' will be on hand to help you with all your personal Nintendo problems. So if you're a little depressed because your player sprites all seem suicidal, why not give the helpline a call on 062 665500 for a technique or cheat to inject a little life into your gameplay.

The Club Nintendo magazine is published every other month, and includes reviews, previews, readers letters, and Hints and Tips. You can subscribe free for a year by sending in the card included with new Game Paks or by sending your name and address, along with your Nintendo's serial number to: Club Nintendo, PO Box 30, Coventry. CV1 3BR.

The existence of both the helpline and the club are signs of the growing popularity of Consoles in this country, and of the increased commitment within the industry to cultivating the revived console market.

MUTE PC OWNERS GET SOUND FOR A PRICE

PC owners who are exasperated at the continuing lack of decent sound generation on even the newest PCs can achieve relief with the Games Blaster from Data Liberation Limited. This nifty little add-on boasts no less than 12 stereo polyphonic voices, a 2.5 watt amplifier, and volume control. It will connect to headphones, a stereo system or directly to speakers.

The unit is already supported by games from Sierra On-Line, Electronic Arts, Mediagenic, Cinemaware and Origin. As a taster, it comes supplied with a copy of *Silpheed* from Sierra On-Line.

Dedicated music software to drive the unit is available from Creative Labs, the designers of the module. This includes an intelligent organ program that is supplied with the package.

The module comes as a half-size expansion board for the princely sum of £119 exclusive of VAT, and will be launched at the forthcoming PC Show. Further details from Data Liberation Limited on 0983 864674.

The market for the *Games Blaster* is going to consist almost entirely of PC owners who use their machines for entertainment. If a company like Data Liberation can recognise the size and strength of such a market, then isn't it time that IBM opened its eyes and began to recognise that the PC is no longer a micro exclusive to the business user, but has generated a large following of other enthusiasts as well.

SPEAKEASY

Good news for software developers comes in the form of the AMT Speech Development System from Applied Microsystems Technology. The SDS uses revolutionary software techniques to achieve a high rate of data compression without sacrificing the quality of the reproduction. The unit achieves a compression rate of 1% and a data rate of just 2 kilobits per second.

For those not technically minded, this means that it is possible to squeeze five minutes of speech into the amount of memory previously consumed by a mere three seconds using conventional techniques. What's more, it still sounds nice!

TOO LATE FOR GAZZA?

Empire have come up with the most incredibly original game idea ever! A soccer simulation endorsed by one of the leading lights of the game: Paul Gascoigne. Only trouble is it's been done so often before.

Empire have rather kindly said that they don't mind if you don't support Spurs — you can still play *Gazza's Super Soccer*. But whether there are any soccer fans out there who still don't own a computer simulation remains to be seen. If you're one of them, contact Empire on 0268 541126 for further information.

Paul Gascoigne indulging in a little post-goal playfulness!

INTERPHASE OUT SOON FROM MIRRORSOFT

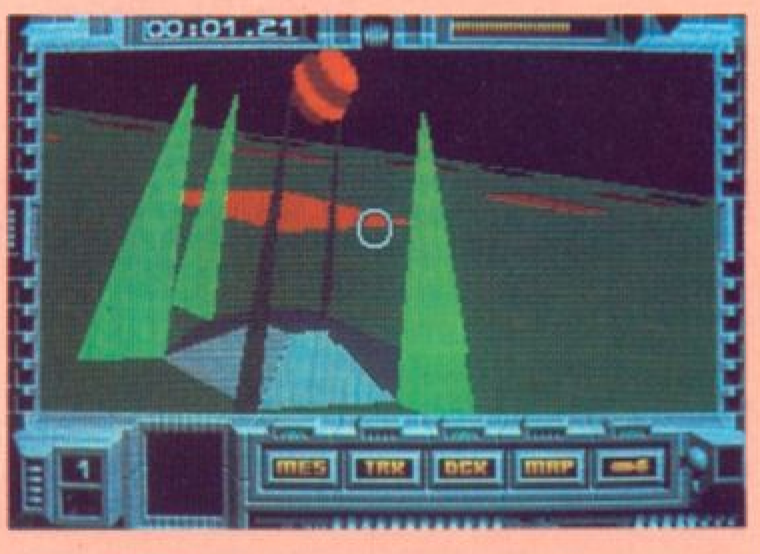
After an incredibly long development period, *Interphase* is finally ready. The game is set in the future, a time when experiencing other people's dreams has become the equivalent of video games (Can it be true?).

As a one-time professional dreamer you must enter the mainframe computer of The Corporation in an attempt to stop them enslaving the minds of the populace.

The interior of the computer is generated with super-fast 3D filled vector graphics that make *Starglider* look positively primitive. The game, in which you adjust security systems to allow your female companion to break into the Mainframe building, also looks very playable.

A full review will be printed in next months issue, but from what we've seen so far, *Interphase* looks like a winner.

Details from Mirrorsoft on 01-928 1454.



The implications of a technique like this being applied to games software are intriguing. Until now, when speech has appeared in entertainment software, it has been either ridiculously minimal or of appalling quality. The *SMS* could very well be the first practical solution. The only disadvantage is that the unit will set you back £3,000. Rich companies can contact AMT on 01 450 3222.

DRAGON USERS LEFT OUT IN THE COLD AGAIN

The 8-bit Micro show will be held at the Tamworth Arts Centre on the 26th November. The show caters for owners of the Commodore 64, 16, and +4, the Atari XL/XE, the BBC Micro and Electron, Spectrum, Oric, Amstrad CPC, MSX, and Einstein. As usual Dragon owners have been forgotten about, not to mention Memotech owners. But that's enough moaning from us, we're pleased to hear that 8-bit micros are still being supported at all.

There are still some spaces available at £25 for a 6 foot stand (plus £5 if you need a power point.) Contact Delmont Betts at 8 Healey, Lakeside, Tamworth, Staffs. B77 2RF.

AMIGA ANIMATIONS

A computer animation festival was held between August 26th and September 2nd by the Amiga Centre, Scotland to coincide with the Edinburgh International Festival. The entries were judged by Len Breen of Middlesex Polytechnic, Jack Garrow of In Video Broadcast Ltd, and Nick Masters of TV Production Magazine.

The winners were Mark Wirt for *Maggie Goes Green*; Jonathon Grant (aged 9!) for *J's Pointers*, Dileep Sharma for *Royal Bank of Scotland Logo*, and John Armstrong for *Engine*.

In addition there were three second category winners, and 11 other prize winners. The prizes were donated by ten companies associated with computers or animation.

Martin Lowe from the Amiga Centre commented: 'We have seen some amazing talent within the Amiga community and look forward to next years competition entries. The exhibition has attracted a wide range of people, some who have never before seen computer animation.'

For further details concerning the festival contact Martin Lowe on 031 557 4242.

THE ACE CHALLENGE

The PC Engine, reported on this month's issue, the Konix Multi-System, the Amiga – even the Commodore 64 in its day – have all proved that imaginative hardware design can generate some truly great software.

All of us who are dedicated to games playing must realise that we now stand on the threshold of a whole new age of computerised entertainment. Games are moving away from their old Space Invader image and into a new age of mass appeal.

Right now, much of the attention is being paid to consoles, since these appear to deliver more techno-bangs per buck than the current range of 16-bit computers. But it would be a great shame if the micro we all know and love were to disappear and be replaced by small lumps of featureless plastic – however good the games are.

Hence the ACE Challenge. A staggering £20,000 to be divided between the manufacturer of the ACE Challenge Machine (subject to certain conditions as outlined in the ACE Challenge Charter – see below) and the programmer of the first ACE rated 900+ game to run on the new micro.

But it's not the money that's important – all the pound signs tell you is how much we're committed to seeing some red hot, games-dedicated hardware making its appearance on our sitting room tables.

As an ACE reader, you'll doubtless be as committed to the future of computer entertainment as we are. We don't want to monopolise the discussion – we want to involve you too. So if you want to contribute your own points of view in ACE, either on the ACE Challenge itself, or on the subject of Advanced Computer Entertainment in general, put pen to paper NOW and tell the world. We'll reserve a special section in the magazine each month for those of you who write in about the Challenge, together with your suggestions, criticisms, and perhaps even your own challenges!

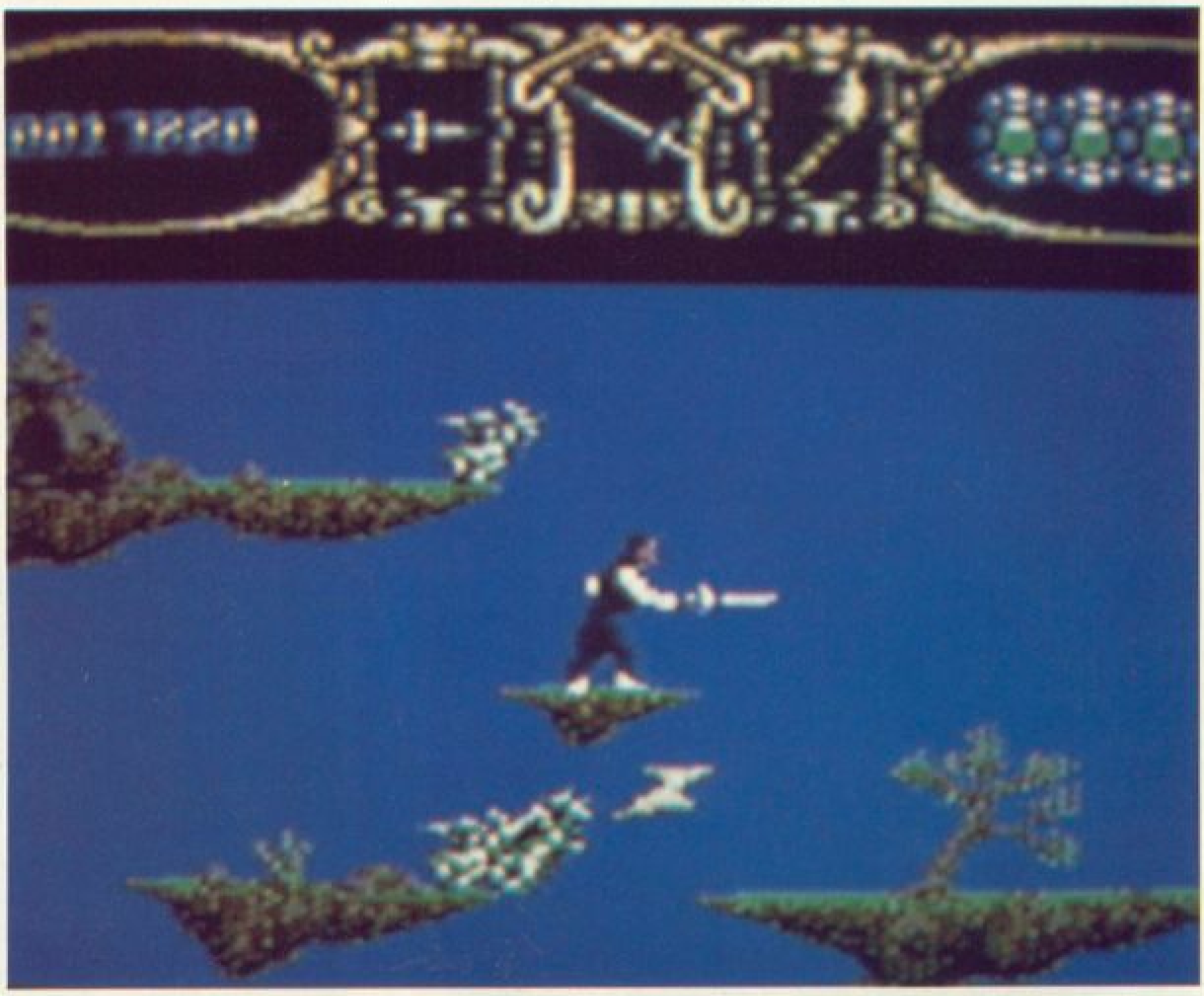
We'll also keep you informed about any developments related to the ACE Challenge, whether they be in hardware or software. Not only will we be printing news in the magazine, but we're offering readers a chance to receive a personal update – all you have to do is send us a stamped, self-addressed envelope (A4 size) marked Challenge Update and we'll send you an information sheet as soon as we have something to report. That way, you'll be kept in touch with some of the most exciting developments in entertainment technology today.

You can also receive full details of the ACE Challenge itself in the Challenge Charter, a document that includes the full conditions under which the £20,000 becomes payable. These are outlined on the back page of the ACE Challenge booklet (on the front cover of this issue – or write to us for a copy if yours is missing) but the Charter contains the full spec. The Charter is available on request and receipt of a stamped, addressed A4 envelope.

Keep your fingers crossed, and remember: electronic entertainment is THE watchword for the 1990's. As an ACE reader, you're right in the front line of the revolution.

IT'S NO MYTH

Here's the exclusive 16-bit screenshot of System Three's highly regarded C64 arcade adventure, *Myth*. Taking the role of a time travelling hero, you visit places like Hell and Medusa's Caverns battling skeletons and four-headed Hydrants. *Myth* is a puzzle orientated arcade game with the style and quality associated with System Three's other releases such as *Last Ninja*. *Myth* is available now for ST and Amiga, and PC owners can also look forward to a version for their machine, no release date as yet.



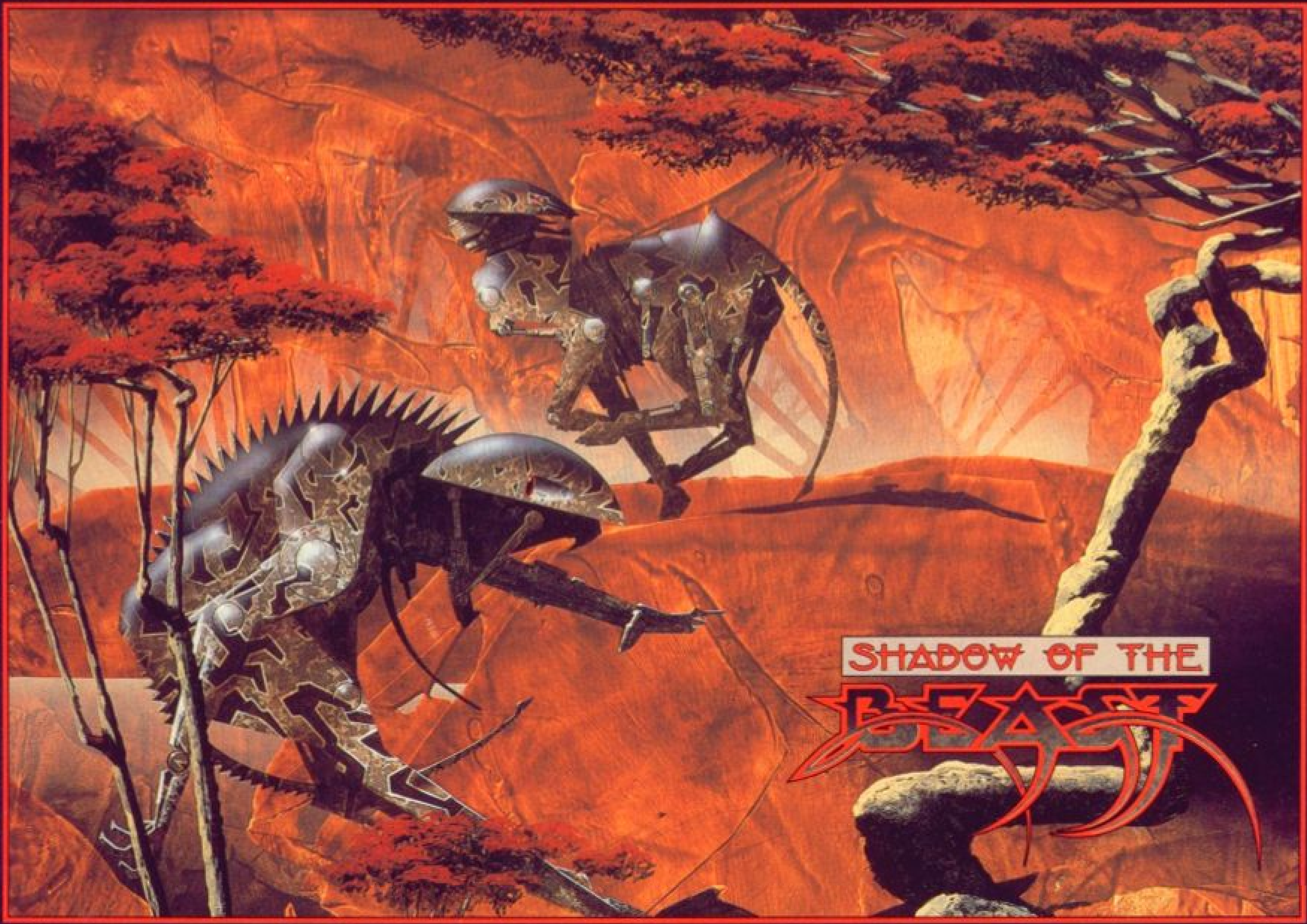
System Three's *Myth* – not to be confused with the Magnetic Scrolls adventure of the same name.

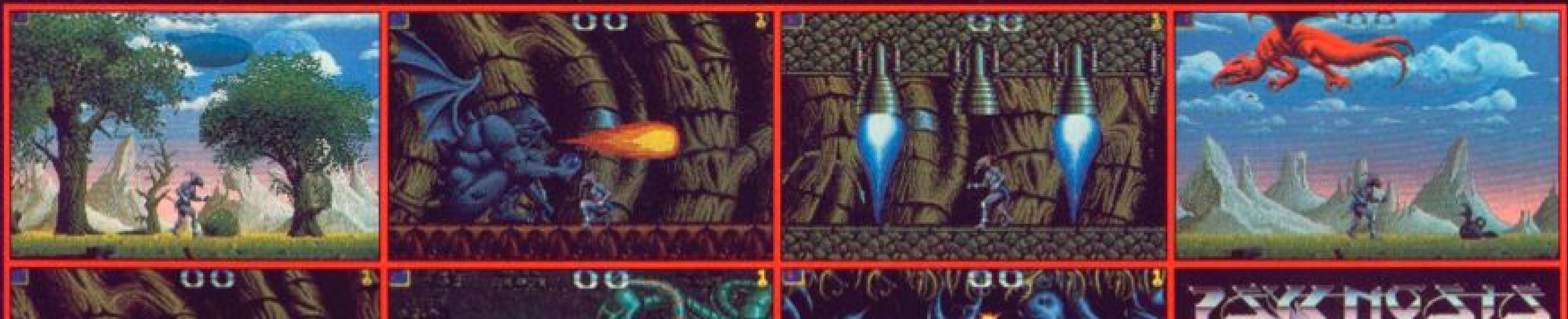
THE CHEAPEST 16-BIT GAMES EVER!

Leading budget software company Virgin/Mastertronic has launched a startling new low cost 16-bit budget label. 16 Blitz games are a combination of original and re-released products, selling for a meagre £4.99 each. The 21 titles scheduled for immediate release include: *Road Wars* (ST/Amiga – the Amiga version is a specially enhanced version not previously released), *Speedboat Assassin* (ST/Amiga), California Golf (PC only), *Kelly X* (ST/Amiga) and *World Darts* (ST, Amiga and PC). With the average high cost of 16-bit games, let's hope other software companies follow Virgin/Mastertronic's historic lead…

GET YOURSELF A WALKING, TALKING PC ROBOT

What will those crazy Yanks think up next? The latest peripheral for your trusty old PC is Newton, the intelligent robot that can walk, talk, work, play, learn, teach and even make the tea! This 32" high robot uses a sophisticated speech synthesis and recognition system allowing it to understand and act on personal human instructions. Newton's internal control mechanics are controlled by an on-board microcomputer, with a PC providing the application programs. Newton also includes a built-in 300 baud modem for communication to the outside world. Further details can be obtained from US developer SynPet on 0101 208 376 0303.





SUPERB FREE 'T' SHIRT

ENCLOSED IN EVERY GAME

ORIGINAL UNIQUE ROGER DEAN DESIGN

THE BEAST IS AMONG US

This is it - A whole new dimension in computer games
50 frames per second arcade quality scroll
350 screens - 132 unique monsters
13 levels of parallax scrolling
900K of emotive music
2Mb of graphics compressed in two disks.

A TRULY MASSIVE GAME FOR THE AMIGA 500, 1000 & 2000

PSYGNOSIS - GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Screen Shots from the Amiga version

AMIGA £34.95/ATARI ST COMING SOON

ACE LETTERS

THE SOUHD OF MUSIC, THE JOY OF CONSOLES, THE FRUSTRATIONS OF FLIGHT SIMS...YOU WROTE IT, WE PRINTED IT...

PUMP UP THAT VOLUME!

PRIZE LETTER

Why don't most reviewers comment on the brilliant music included in some games for the computers with good soundchips? The Amiga has a custom chip and facilities for an amplifier to be connected and the results of certain groups' efforts to include modern music in games is sometimes quite stunning. So let's have a mention in the future if you can. To show you what I mean, I have compiled a top 10 list of the best tunes that my Amiga/C64 comrades and I pump up the volume for:

Game	Computer	Composer/company
BLOOD MONEY: main theme	Amiga	Ray Norrish/*Psygnosis*
SANXION: main theme	C64 (origin)	Rob Hubbard/*Thalamus*
RENEGADE: loading music	C64	Unknown/*Imagine*
SWORD OF SODAN: main theme	Amiga	Julian Lefay/*Discovery*
LED STORM: all themes	Amiga	T & M Follin/*US Gold*
SAVAGE: Stages 1 and 3	Amiga	Kevin Collier/*Firebird*
HYBRIS: main theme	Amiga	P Van Der Valk/*Discovery*
BAAL: main theme	Amiga	Ray Norrish/*Psygnosis*
R-TYPE: loading theme	Amiga	Chris Huelsbeck/*E Dreams*
DATASTORM: main theme	Amiga	Tim Engels/*Visionary Design Technologies.*

A.Jeffs, Braunton

Any more music charts out there...or graphics charts, or gameplay charts...??

FLY ME

I must confess that I bought my Atari ST for the sole purpose of flying Aircraft Simulations. There are plenty of them around at the moment, and no end of them waiting in the wings, so you might think that I would be a happy armchair pilot. Sadly I'm not, and it's all to do with the variation in keyboard controls.

Why can't the programmers standardise on a keyboard control system that is common to all simulators? If I press the "U" key on *Combat Pilot*, the F16 undercarriage comes up; on *Falcon*, I get yanked out of the cockpit for a satellite view of the aircraft.. To get the undercarriage up on *Falcon*, I have to press "G" for "Gear"; if I do that on *Combat Pilot*, I'm requesting a talk-down landing from the control tower (which is a bit embarassing when you've only just taken off!). It's all very confusing, and leads one to the conclusion that it's better to decide on one simulation and stick with it, rather than keep buying the new ones that come out and have to go through the process of learning a totally new set of commands.

The one I'm sticking with is *Combat Pilot*. Its graphics aren't as good as *Falcon*, but it has an extra feature that wins hands down (or Head-Up as the Fighter Jocks would say): an option for two-joystick control. You just click on the computer graphic on the menu-screen, and select the option. Then, when you arrive at the cockpit screen, you simply unplug the mouse, and plug in a second joystick; and suddenly you have the throttle control in your left hand, where it should be, just like a real aeroplane. You also have left and right rudder control on this stick, whilst on the right-hand stick you have the normal yaw and pitch directional controls.

The ability to change speed with a flick of the left joystick is exceptionally useful in dogfighting and ground attack, and saves fumbling for the "plus" and "minus" keys like you have to do when flying *Falcon*, just as the Mig 21 is about to blow you away.

So take note, you future Flight Simulation Programmers, two joysticks really is the only way to fly. And it's the only way you're going to get this customer to climb into any new-fangled cockpits.

M.G.Eustace, Cookridge

UNHAPPY

I would like to write a game in machine code but I have come across a problem. I asked my cousin who is a programmer to a large company to give me some assistance. He answered "Sorry I can't help you - I don't know how to do it", so I go to my other cousin who is a programming expert for another company – same reply. Next I go to a friend who has a list of qualifications relating to computing, I ask him for help, again I get the same answer as before.

Funnily enough, though, all of these people have said to me that games programming is far too simple and unrewarding – if this is the case how is it none of them could help me?

As I live in Birmingham (which is the worst city to become interested in games programming) I have no way of getting any help with my problem therefore I must forfeit my project.

Nigel Smith, Birmingham

We have two suggestions.
(1) Change your address;
(2) Change your toothpaste.

DESPERATE

Software houses must be under the impression that they can treat the buyer with absolute contempt. They keep us waiting for months on end for their product, they do not reply to any queries, and they never supply any helpful hints about their games. It annoys me to see page after page of tips and pokes from readers when in fact, these should be supplied by the software house.

I have an absolute string of A and O levels but I also have a string of games which defied completion. No help from the software house however, no help from the instruction book and no help when asked for.

I don't think I can stand much more of it. An Amstrad, a Commodore and an Amiga could be for sale very shortly.

Robert Lamb, Cottingham

PRIZE QUESTION

I am writing to ask why you have not yet printed the results of a couple of recent competitions, ie, Cinemaware/PC, Radio Ace competitions. I am aware of the recent take-over by EMAP but please could you print the results soon?

When you were running the Ace card competition you said you would do something similar in the future so when do you think you will do it?

I think that when you print screenshots on any game you should also print what graphic versions they are. Please could you bring back Ace On The Road.

Edwin Birch, Dallington

All the prize winners are named in this issue – check the Pink Pages for details. ACE On The Road will continue to appear on an irregular basis, whenever we visit someone interesting enough to write about! Stand by for reports from more British software houses, as well as America and Japan. As for the ACE Card, we will be replacing this with a new competition, to be run monthly. It's called the Final Verdict, and you can find out more about it on page 132 – The Final Verdict starts next month – don't miss it!

CONSOLES MATTER

When I opened Ace Issue 24 I was overjoyed to read a letter from a fellow Sega user (Thanks Oliver)

Saga's are underated by the Amiga and ST users because they think they are cheap and nasty. But people like me have spent £100s on our segas, buying games like Altered Beast, and Shinobi, which Amiga and ST users can't get yet (like Olly said). Score now:

Sega 1 Amiga. ST's etc 0

But there is a problem for us Sega owners, and that is that the games cost between £15 and to around £45. And the Amiga and ST games differ more.

Sega 1 Amiga ST's 1

Heres another one for the Sega: the actual consoles/computer costs about 1/5 of the Amiga and 1/4 of the ST.

Sega 2 Amiga 1

But here's a few more points for the Amiga and ST's. They are 16 Bit and they have got better sound and graphics:

Final Score Sega 2 Amiga ST's 3

So who cares? we love our Segas.

Chris Blowes, Enfield

If only the whole subject was as simple as football, we could all tot up the scores, make our buying decisions, and live happily ever after. But in reality it isn't like that at all. Consoles offer none of the computing applications versatility of computers, but on the other hand the new range of consoles (Konix, Engine, 16-bit Sega) are likely to make most current home micros look a little wobbly on the arcade front. There's only one realistic decision: get both a computer AND a console!

I am thinking of buying a console. First I thought about buying a good old Sega Master System then thought I'd wait aroung for the Sega Megadrive because I wanted a 16 bit, but I didn't want an Amiga or an ST because all I do is play games on it, but what I'd like to know is:

1. When will the Sega Magadrive be launched officially in Britain and how much will it cost?
2. How much will Sega Megadrive games cost when officially launched over here?
no idea
3. I heard that there was a special converter for the Megadrive which enabled you to play old sega games on the megadrive is this true and if so does this mean that when played on the megadrive they have 16 bit graphics and sound.
4. Will old Sega games like *Outrun* and *Afterburner* be available on the Megadrive.
5. What is all this PAL and SCART that keeps popping up in adverts for the PC Engine and Sega Megadrive.

Stephen O'Brien, London

There is no official launch date yet, but distributors Virgin reckon it will be in the 'first quarter' next year, but probably not before March. This would seem to indicate around May 1990. The price of the games has yet to be fixed but the hope is that they will not be more than current Sega titles. The converter does exist, at least so Virgin tell us, but no-one in the UK has yet seen a sample. The 8-bit games will run in their 8-bit versions and big sellers like OutRun and Afterburner may well be converted to Megadrive versions.

Finally, PAL and SCART refer to video data standards and compatibility. A PAL output will drive any UK colour TV, whereas SCART outputs to monitors, although some UK TV's also have a SCART adaptor. You should beware of buying 'grey imported' versions of the Megadrive or the PC Engine since the quality of video output cannot always be guaranteed.

AN APPLE A DAY...

As an Apple II owner (more specifically the IIGS) I find it disappointing that magazines in the UK more often than not simply ignore the computer's existence. There are over 550 Apple II games currently available (many of which have been reviewed in ACE), with over 100 Apple IIGS specific entertainment programs including the popular *War in Middle Earth* and *Dungeon Master*. Your lack of reference to these computers when compiling a Release Box is surprising.

The Apple II has been around in various forms since the late 70's, and despite Apple UK's apparent lack of interest, the IIgs, introduced in 1986, is still available from authorised dealers. The 65816 based 16-bit IIgs is a capable computer. Features include 4096 colours. 640x200 resolution RGB output, standard Apple Desktop Interface (Mac style WIMPs), 8MB internal RAM expansion, 1Mb ROM expansion, 7 expansion slots, and peripherals (keyboard, disk drives, midi etc.) freely interchangeable with those from the Mac.

As for music/sound (with reference to your MUSIC series) the IIGS has a built in Ensoniq "Digital Oscillator Chip" (as used in the Mirage Music Synthesizer) with 30 paired oscillators producing 15 sound channels. An Analogue-Digital converter is also available on the Ensoniq device, not to mention 64K of dedicated sound RAM. Surely qualities worthy of mention in your Music articles (please note M. Bates).

The IIGS may not be as popular in the UK as in the United States, but a home computer with these features should not be ignored (or forgotten) by a magazine dedicated to Advanced Computer Entertainment.

Dr. K. Kishimoto, Withington

ACE is currently reviewing its policy on other machine formats. See next month's issue for the result. We think you'll be pleased...

GLOWING TRIBUTE TO RISING SUN

I feel I must complain about your review of *Lords of the Rising Sun* in the June issue.

I have played the game for weeks and at one time for 8 hours, and the following day 7 hours. I lost. But I was completely held by this great game. What other game can keep your interest for 8hours?!! And you still want to play it afterwards...

I say well done to Cinemaware, who always produce fantastic Amiga software – The Only Ones who produce software always worth buying.

S. Hayward, Bournemouth

How much did they pay you?!

8-BIT BEANO

I'm not going to talk about software piracy, ST vs Amiga, Censorship etc...

What if it told you that on November 26th the '8 Bit Micro Show' is to be held in Tamworth. Yes, that's right. No 16 bit machines allowed. The following can attend:

C64, c16/+4, MSX, CPC, Spectrum, BBC/Electron etc...

Entrance is 75p per person which includes freebies, a free draw to win an Atari 65XER, and don't forget all those stands with bargain priced games, joysticks, new software up and running, etc. Maps are available with bookings to the address below:

D. Betts, 8, Healey, Lakeside,
Tamworth, Staffs, B77 2RF.

BBS BABY

I have started a new BBS running on a 1040 ST specifically aimed at the ST. I would appreciate it if any Modem users out there would log on and leave some feedback mail about discussion areas they would like to see, help lines they think may be useful etc.

The name of the BBS is the Tavern, it runs on V21/23 modes,

CRACKED?

I live in Holland and, as you may or may not know, almost every computer hobbyist in my country gets all his (cracked) software for free. When I bought my first computer (C-64) I thought this was a normal situation, but as I began to read English magazines I discovered that the foreign attitude towards this behaviour was completely different. Listen to this anecdote.

A friend of mine who also owned a C-64 at that time, went on holiday to his English cousin. He brought his computer with him (including about 2000 cracked software titles). His cousin, who was a C-64 owner also, was very pleased to see this enormous amount of software. My friend offered to copy all the software he wanted. Now his cousin was even more happy – until he discovered that everything was cracked. From that print he didn't even want to play the games anymore. And the disks that already contained some copied stuff? Guess what he did with them. Yes, he cleared them all!

I don't know what you think of this cousin's behaviour, but we Dutch people find it (a bit) weird. I really do not know anybody in Holland (and I'm really not only talking about friends, but computer owners from all over the country) who would act like he did.

Sometimes I really fee pity for all those gamers who can only buy about two or three titles a month with pain in their wallets. You see, nowadays I own an Amiga 500, and I'm undescribably happy with it (I'm a computer science student) but I ask myself if I would have purchased it if I wasn't able to get all my software for free (and so think my teachers – believe me everybody in Holland does). Between the lines, did you know that three of my friends bought an Amiga 500 just because they were allowed to copy my software (for free of course)).

Perhaps you already know, but let me tell you this. I possess almost 200 of the latest software titles. (that means all big hits that you review in your mag.). I guess you are not very pleased to hear that, but that's just the way things are in Holland. You know that people consider me crazy if I go to the store and purchase some software? (Unless it's stuff with a lot of documentation).

Eddy Borremans, Holland

Unfortunately Holland isn't the only country to take this attitude to piracy. The same situation exists in many other European countries, with Greece and Italy being historically inclined to software piracy (though the situation is improving). And as regular ACE readers will know, we've already reported on the piracy situation in Denmark. These countries all have one thing in common: they pirate imported software. Ultimately it's British and American companies who lose the money and not Danish, Italian, or Dutch ones. Perhaps that has something to do with it...There is also the question of price, with games costing more (sometimes far more) in different territories, but after 1992 the price problem should come to an end. Whether the habits will come to an end as well seems less likely.

As a dedicated games player, I have become so disgruntled with the state of current software that I feel I must let my views be aired.

Having been on the games "scene" since those early "Binatone TV Games" were around, I have played many games for many hours. However, recently, games do not seem to be holding my attention for more than a few hours. As you will have noticed there is no address on this letter, this is because I am a so-called "pirate" of games. After three years of owning my ST, I am totally fed up with the trash that appears. I mean, the games on the ST are so bad that I now play on my old Atari 8-bit more than the ST - which is hardly a good advertisement for new technology. I shall remain a pirate until the software house buck their ideas up and release games which live up to their Megahype, and drop their prices. Games should be "playable"; Kick Off proves that gameplay can be a substitute for Megahybes of graphics, and games should be based on gameplay, not graphics and sound, and these two should only be souped up after the gameplay cannot be improved anymore.

The 8-bit prophet

and uses 8-n-1 format. The number is 01-881 9799 and is available from 9pm to 6am Mondays to Saturdays.

Paul Baker, Wood Green, London

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...

Whatever happened to Superior's *Conqueror*, which was being converted to the Amiga and ST from the Archimedes in June '88?!!

Also what happened to Linel's *Dragonslayer*, which was advertised to be released for the Amiga in January 1989?!

A.Jeffs, Braunton

Dragonslayer has been 'delayed' but is on its way. As for conqueror...we were unable to contact Superior at the time going to press, but we'll keep you informed.

ARCHIE BARGIE

I've found a company who are producing a whole range of software for the Archie, including games resembling *OutRun* and *After-Burner*. The company is named Cambridge International Software, tel. 01-278 6622. The company plans about 25 products by December. These also include conversions of *Dungeon Master* and other popular games. This software will surely help bring the Archie into the limelight. Lastly, thanks for a super mag – the Archie seems to be creeping slowly into ACE more and more frequently...

K. Pardesi, London

Other machine owners can take comfort from the fact that all titles will be converted for most popular formats.

AMIGA MYSTERY

After playing *Xybots*, I powered off my Amiga for 35 seconds as normal. Switching it back on again I was met with a dull grey screen and that was it...

Can you help? My Amiga won't work properly, refusing information from disks and sometimes never coming on at all!

Wiz (no address supplied)

PS I wrote to you because you're the only intelligent mag around.

As the only intelligent mag around, we have decided, after lengthy discussion, that your computer is possibly...broken. We believe that the solution may be to...er...get it mended. Er...Um...Contact your dealer, or someone...

ACE PRINTER

After playing *Populous* on my Amiga 1000 times I gladly send you all the codes for all the levels. I have printed them out on my colour printer and stuck them on a card especially for you.

Zafar Bhatti, Hounslow

We were very impressed by the print out, Zafar. We were even more impressed by the printer's apparent ability to print out – on the reverse side of the paper – a page from another magazine.

VIOLENCE

I have recently discovered that if a game really annoys you then a simple solution is to take it out of the disk drive and make some weirdo growling noises at it. If doing this seems prattish to you then you are probably a bit of a smarmy person. If anyone out there in stupid land thinks I'm daft, then they should come and see me so I can (a) punch their stupid faces and (b) give them a good stiff kick up the rear.

Jimbo Corleone, Coventry

The weirdo growling noises make perfect sense to us, though we find that short, sharp yapping sounds work better. However, our psychiatrist was disturbed by the level of violence implicit in the latter half of your letter. Seek assistance.

KICK OFF

After the success of *Kick Off* on ST, Amiga, and C64 (and the Spectrum version currently being released), we've decided to take the plunge and produce *Kick Off 2.*

We thought it would set a nice precedent, however, if – instead of simply going ahead and producing the game to our own specifications – we asked current players of *Kick Off* to send us their suggestions for features that could be included in the new game.

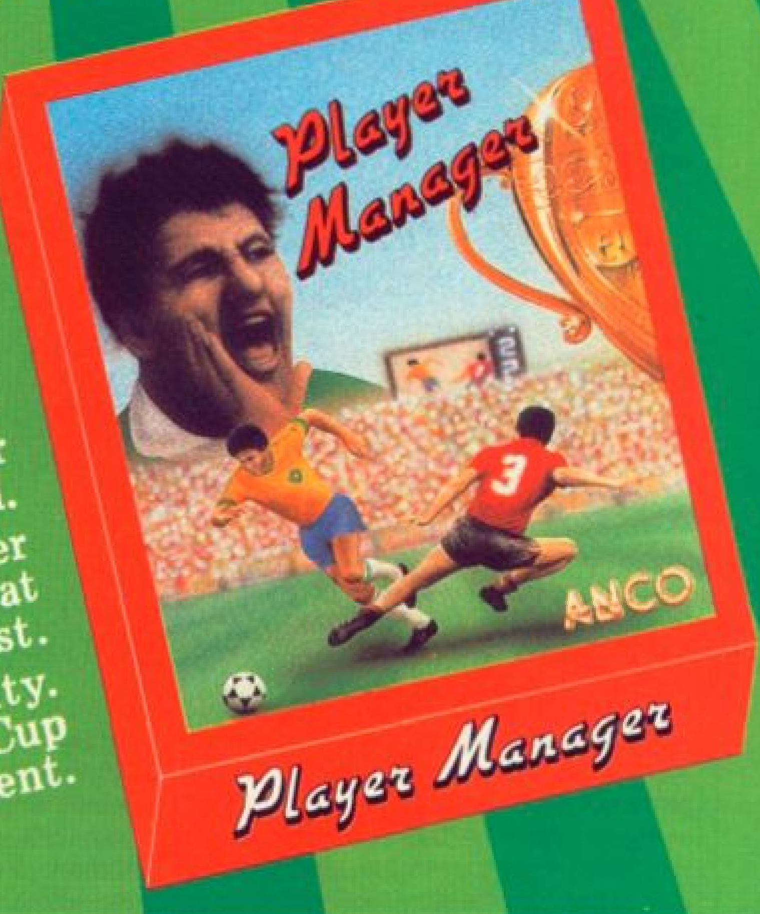
If you've played *Kick Off* and have some ideas for gameplay or presentation that you'd like to see included in the new game, drop us a line at Anco, Unit 10, Burnham Trading Estate, Lawson Road, Dartford, Kent, DA1 5BH.

Anil Gupta, Anco Software Ltd

Player Manager

BRINGS THE QUALITY OF 'KICK OFF' TO THE ART OF MANAGEMENT

- * Play the BEST soccer simulation. Blistering Pace - Pixel Perfect Passing.
- * Unique facility to design your own TACTICS.
- * Train your squad and watch them put the new tactics in action.
- * Over 1000 players in the league. Each player with a unique combination of attributes.
- * A lively transfer market. Haggle or barter for the best deal.
- * Facility to focus camera on any player on the field. Have a hard look at a player on the transfer list.
- * Load and Save game facility. League and Cup tournament.



Bring Back The Glory Days. That's the brief of the newly appointed PLAYER MANAGER, an international class player, as he takes charge of a third division club. His success depends on four distinct aspects of the game.

PLAYING SKILLS OF THE MANAGER

This part of the game is a refined version of the KICK OFF, retaining it's pace, flavour and the universally acclaimed game play. Play in your position or control the nearest player. The first option combined with a tailor made tactics can play havoc in the opposition goal mouth.

MANAGERIAL SKILLS

Devising winning tactics, acquiring players with right skills from the Transfer market and selecting a team with the right balance is the test of the Managerial skills. He must aim to get promotion as quickly as possible while he can still influence the results as a player and before the age starts to effect his pace and stamina. When to hang his boots up is the toughest decision he has to make.

TACTICS

Four well proven tactics are provided to suit most situations but you can design your own tactics. The pitch is divided in blocks. Place the ball in a block and move the players to the required position. Repeat the process for each block. See the tactics in action using the Ray Trace facility.

THE PLAYERS

Over a thousand players in the four division league. Each player with a unique combination of the following attributes: SHOOTING ACCURACY, PASSING ACCURACY, PACE, STAMINA, APPLICATION, AGGRESSION, HEIGHT and TACKLING SKILL.
These attributes are influenced by the player's Age, Mental and Physical Dexterity, Quality of Experience, Weight, Temperament and Morale. There are several other factors such as injury, disciplinary points, unsuitable playing position which influence a player's performance.

Hosts of other factors like referees, injuries, disciplinary problems, team morale etc. can lay to waste the best laid plans of a manager. The PLAYER MANAGER brings everyday realities of a Manager's life, his talents as a manager and a player into a sharp FOCUS. THE FOCUS IS ON YOU.

AMIGA - ATARI ST £19.95

CBM 64 - SPECTRUM - AMSTRAD £9.95 (Cassette) £14.95 (Disc) ***SOON***

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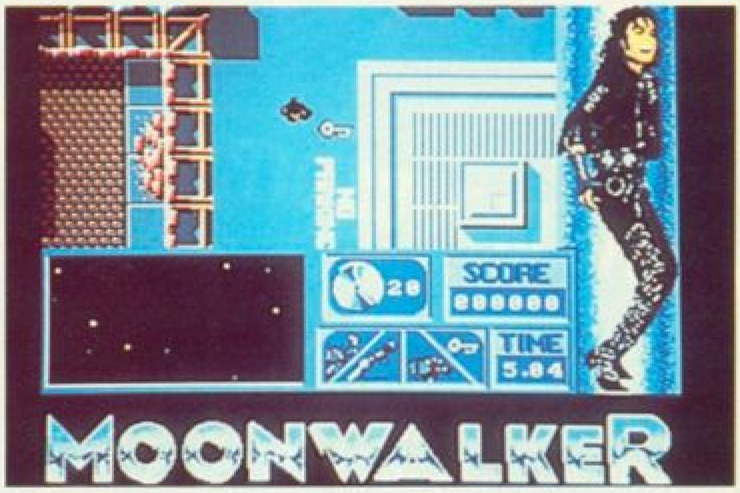
COMING SOON...

OLD GROPER GETS HIS GRUBBY MITTS ON MORE GOODIES...

Old Groper's back with another sackful of autumnal goodies, ready to sort out the hots shots from the lame shots. Here's his report on the latest offerings for your favourite machines, and as he's in a generous mood there are a couple of snazzy screenshots for you to drool over. Enjoy...



Top: Our hero (that's him in the leather gear) homes in on the key to success in *Moonwalker* the game, coming soon from US Gold.

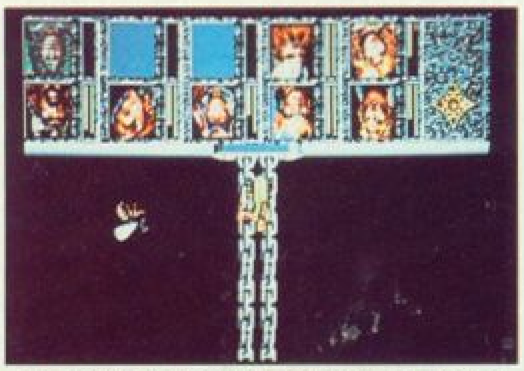
Left: Shimmying out of a spot of bother. Michael struts his stuff in the original *Moonwalker* film.

US Gold have been very busy recently grabbing stars from the big screen and putting them onto your monitor. If you thought the hype surrounding the latest Indiana Jones game was a bit overdone then you ain't seen nothing yet. US Gold's describe their latest personality scoop as having the biggest selling album of all time, winning 8 grammys, 7 American Music awards, 4 American Video awards, and the BPI award for best international artist.

No, it's not Roland Rat, it's none other than big, bad Wacko Jacko. Before you get too excited, the game has nothing whatsoever to do with oxygen tents, pet chimpanzees, or bad nose jobs. Instead it is based on Michael Jackson's first film, Moonwalker. If you haven't seen the film then you'll probably want to know that the story involves the rescue of Michael's good friends from the diabolical Mr. Big.

With the passing of a shooting star Michael gains 'amazing powers of transformation' (much cheaper than using a plastic surgeon)! Michael uses his powers to defeat the evil Mr. Big and his henchmen and rescue his friends, also managing to find time for the odd song or two! US Gold tell us that the rescue of Michael's kidnapped friends combined with the astonishing transformation, battle and chase sequences make Moonwalker an ideal title for conversion into a home computer game. Moonwalker can be expected on all formats in Mid-November. Hmm... should be fun. Gropey awaits the results with interest.

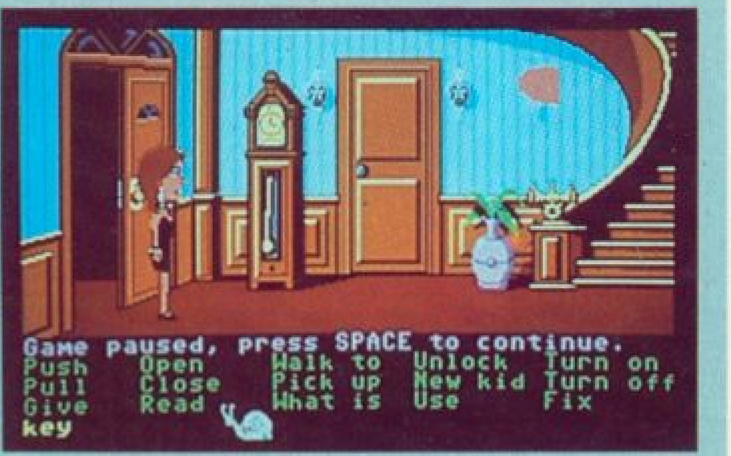
The chappies and chapesses down at USG are also making good use of their TSR licence. Over one year after its launch on the C64 and PC, the Advanced Dungeons & Dragons game, Pool of Radiance is to be released for the ST, Amiga, and Mac. USG are convinced that the new releases will take worldwide sales of the game through the quarter million barrier. Well done US Gold, that's two achievements with one product. The biggest selling Computer RPG, with the longest release schedule! The Pool of Radiance (due in October) release is to be closely followed by Hillsfar (November). Fortunately AD&D fans will not have to wait as long for the next game in the series, Dragons of Flame. This game, set in the Dragonlance Universe, gives you the chance to take part in the quest of the 'Companions of the Lance' as they continue their fight to save Krynn from domination by Takhisis, the Queen of Darkness. Dragons of Flame will be out late October for 16-bit machines, while 8-bit owners can expect to see it late November



A *Dragons of Flame* adventurer discovers there's a sting in this tale!

ADVENTURE FOR MANIACS

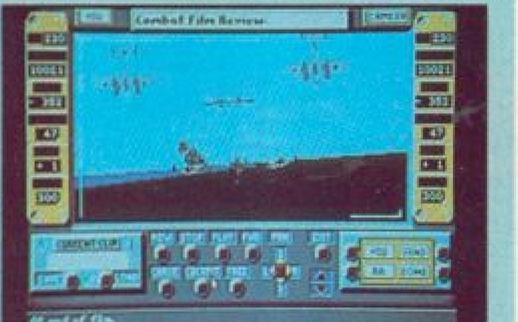
Fresh from Lucasfilm Games, who recently brought us Indy The Graphic Adventure, is a rather more macabre romp involving the evil Dr. Fred. Unlike conventiona adventure games Maniac Mansion is completely mouse driven, so there is no tedious typing. There are seven different characters for the player to control, each with their own distinctive talents and personalities. Lucasfilm promise that the game will be equally appealing to both seasoned adventurers and novices. Since it is spread over 50 rooms containing 450 different objects it should certainly keep even the quickest adventurer happy. US Gold are distributing the 16-bit versions of the game, which will be available in late September. Also due soon from Lucasfilm is Battle of Britain, the game which seeks to recreate the RAF's finest hour.It should be available in November.



Game paused, press SPACE to continue.

Push Open Walk to Unlock Turn on
Pull Close Pick up New kid Turn off
Give Read What is Use Fix
key

Could she be the next victim in *Maniac Mansion* ?



***Battle of Britain* from US Gold.**

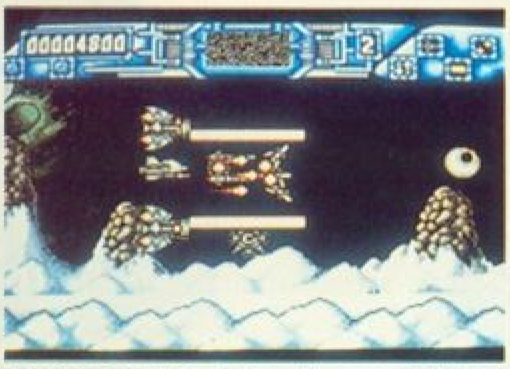
FIVE TO DRIVE

Due out in November for the Amiga (with an ST version to follow six weeks on) is Drivin' Force, the latest game from Digital Magic Software. No ordinary driving game this: it provides you with no less than 5 different vehicles to race. These are a truck, a Formula one car, a bike, a

The *Drivin' Force* of software? Digital Magic Software get inside the game!

common or garden car, and a buggy. There is even a jet-ski bonus level! Amiga owners will be pleased to learn that the game has been developed on that machine. DMS tell us that this results in better versions for both the Amiga and the ST. The game will retail for £24.95 on the Amiga and £19.95 on the ST. Above is a nice piccy of the driving force behind Drivin' Force, although I'm sure you would much rather look at the game instead.

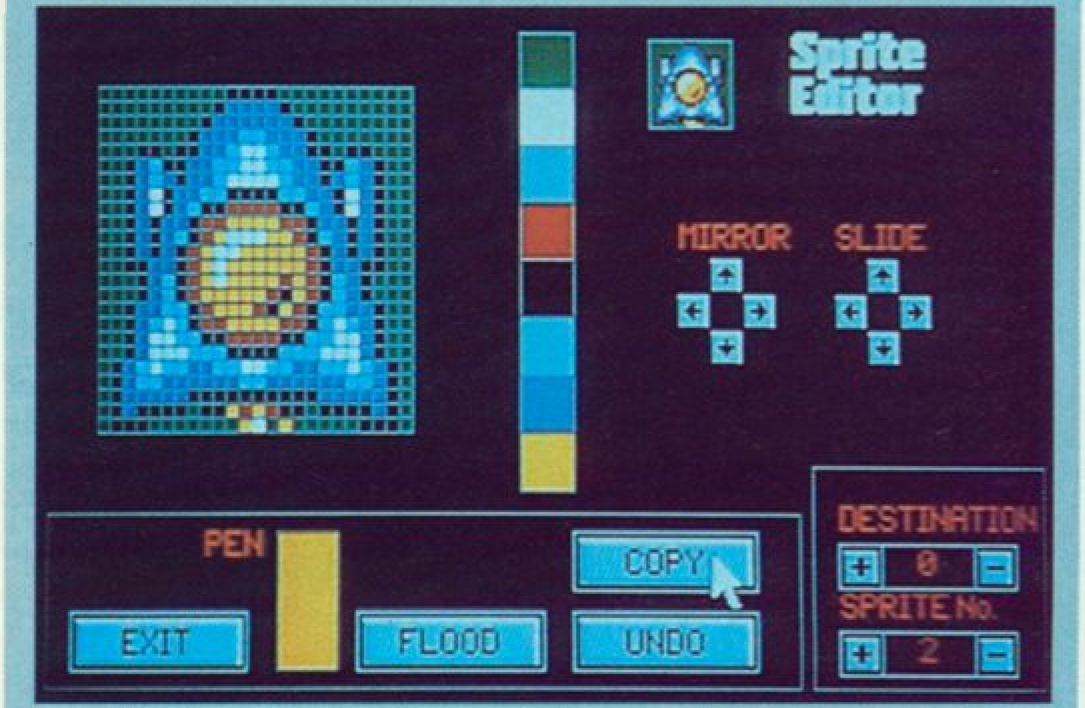
BITS 'N' PIECES



***Darius* from The Edge. It sure ain't as cute as Garfield, which should please arcade shoot em up addicts.**

OUTLAW SHOOTS 'EM UP

Outlaw Productions Shoot-em-up Construction Kit is coming for the ST soon. This STOS basher is already out for the Amiga and C64. It allows the construction of stand alone shoot-em-ups which can be freely distributed to friends (or software houses, although don't expect to see too many SEUCK products in the top ten!). SEUCK should be available in October/November priced £29.99

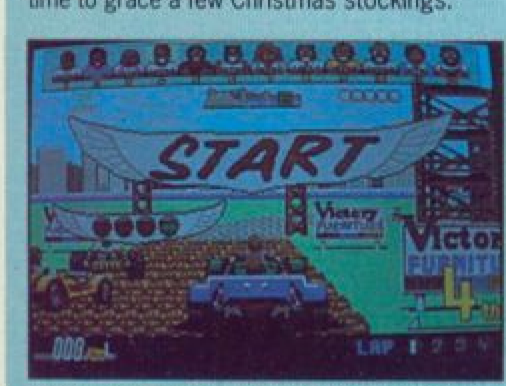


Virgin Mastertronic continues its support of the Sega system with the release of two more games, Casino Games (£24.95, November), and Wanted (£19.95, December). Also due soon from Virgin is Double Dragon II, due on November 11th for the PC (£24.95), ST and Amiga (£19.99), Spectrum +3, C64 disk, and CPC 6128 (£14.99), and Spectrum, C64, and CPC 464 (£9.99)

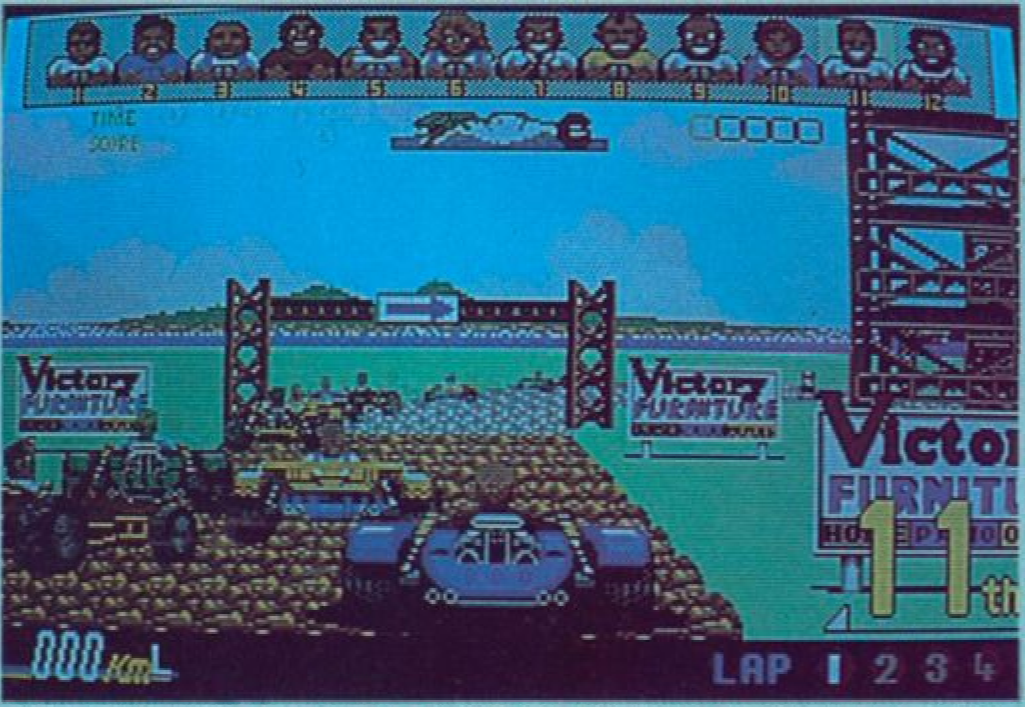
The Edge are currently hard at work on Peanuts featuring lovable old Snoopy and the conversion of the arcade sensation Darius. The latter features the largest sprites ever seen in a computer game. In fact some of them are so large they won't fit on the screen! Make of that what you will. Both programs will be shown at the PC Show. Speaking of which... see you all there!

ACTIVISION IN POLE POSITION?

Anyone who frequents arcades can not have failed to come across Sega's superb game Power Drift. For the benefit of those that haven't, it is a fast 3D racing game that knocks spots off Out Run. Old Groper certainly doesn't envy Activision the task of converting it though. The task has been assigned to veteran programmer ZZKJ, who was previously responsible for the Super Hang On. Power Drift should be out on all major formats in time to grace a few Christmas stockings.



Revving up for the start of a mean race in *Power Drift*, due soon from Activision.



Being driven round the bend by *Power Drift*, Activision's forthcoming conversion of the excellent arcade machine from Sega. No hydraulics though... sorry!

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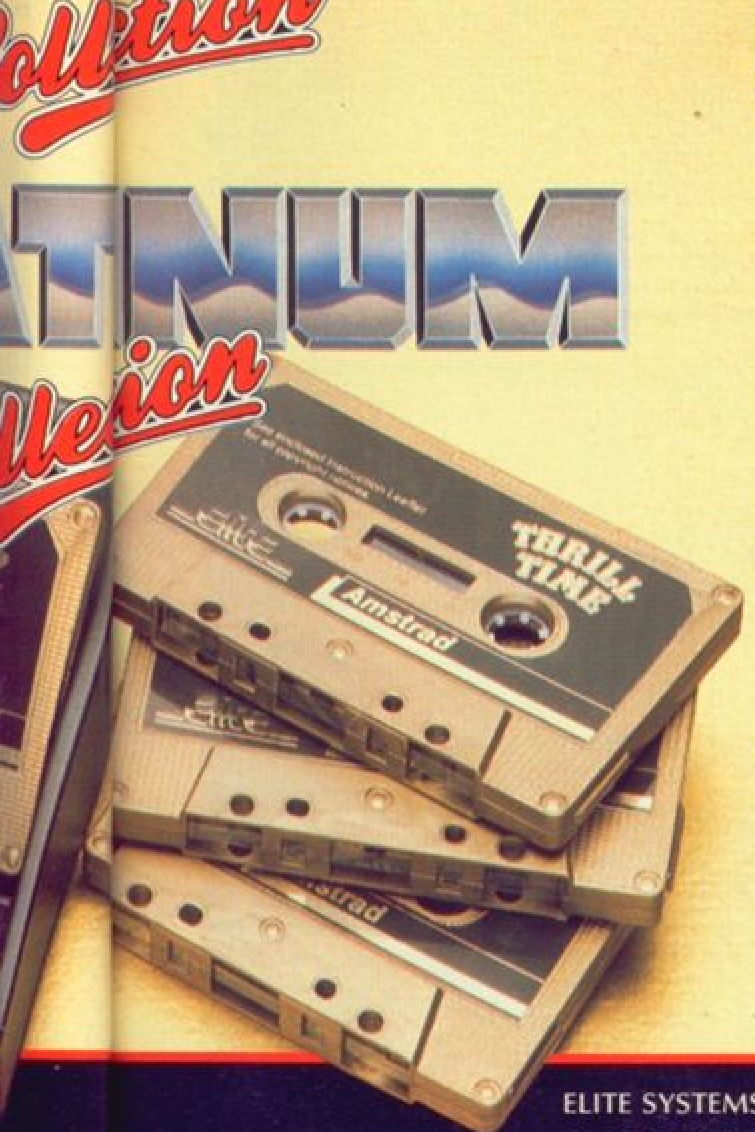

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PLUG 'EM IN...

PLUG IN PCB EXTENSIONS – AND PLUG 'EM IN *VIOLENCE FIGHT...*

Last month we talked about the cost of silicon in general and how Sega had invented its System 24 to try and rationalise things – keeping the same hardware in the box and only changing the software. Capcom, another major Japanese based company, have tried a slightly different tack with their advanced CP System Board.

Apart from being a very highly spaced out board, the CP system approaches the problem of obsolescence from another viewpoint, being a halfway house between completely soft on one hand (like System 24, with disk loading) and being completely hard-wired, like a conventional PCB.

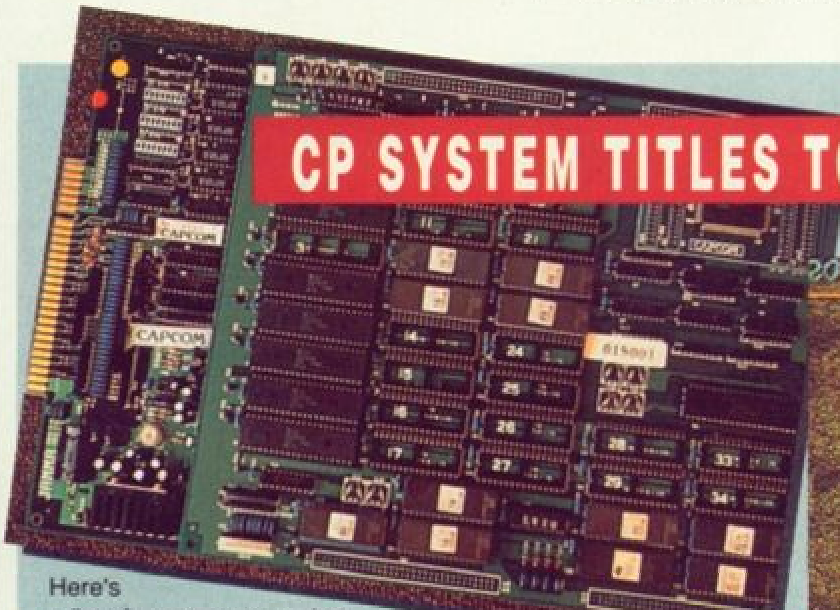
Although the whole of the system is hardwired, it is made up of interlocking motherboards – so if you wanted to change the output game of a board, in theory you would just replace the necessary sections, rather than haaving to invest in a completely new board.

This is particularly useful for Capcom, as CP Boards are not cheap – hardly surprising as the company threw millions of dollars and a lot of time into the whole project.

Like many of the newer high-end boards, the CP has got 2 68000's chugging away inside, but the real mystery of the thing is two custom-designed, very highly integrated chips, that make it really fly. Capcomn is, understandably, relectant to reveal more.

Games on the system so far however, see below, are all technologically outstanding in their own ways, but other than *Strider* have shown little originality of gameplay. But it's only a matter of time before the Capcom technicians come up with something that makes the new system really shine – and that'd be guaranteed to blow away almost anything any other board could deliver at present.

CP SYSTEM TITLES TO WATCH OUT FOR...



▲ **A CP System board – bursting with memory, 68000's, and mysterious custom chips.**

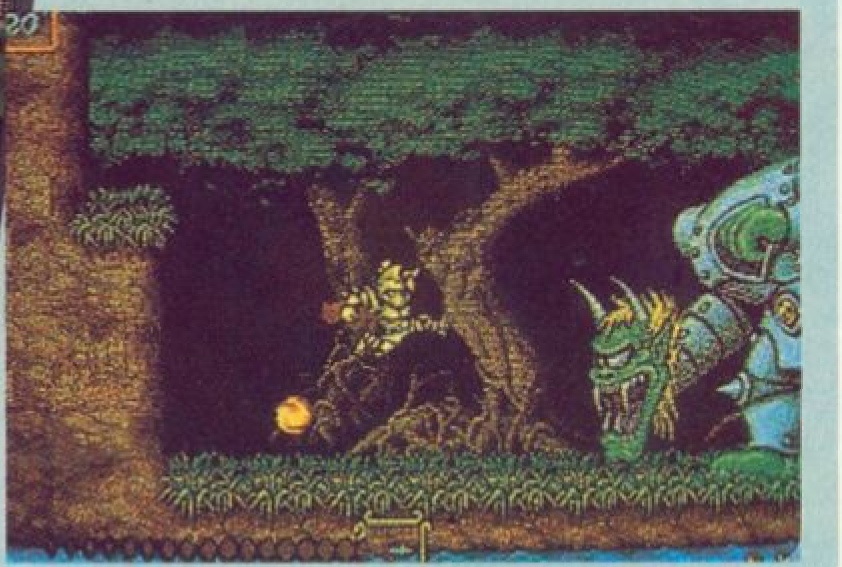
Here's a list of current games that use the CP System Board. If you spot a cabinet running one of these in your local arcade, keep an eye on it – sooner or later another game is liable to spring up on the system, and chances are that Capcom will be developing some particularly strong titles for it.

Forgotten Worlds - Graphic tour de force, but a non-standard control system limited its appeal to arcade operators and so its overall numbers in the field.

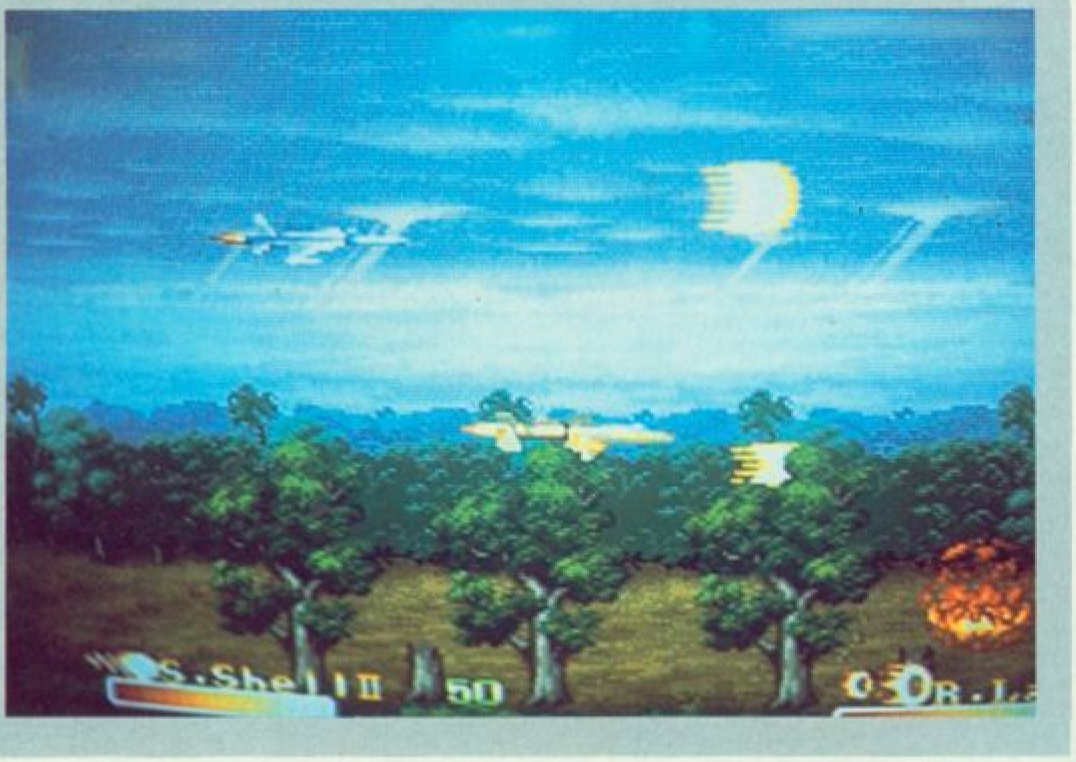
Dynasty Wars - The subject matter (oriental heros scything through armies of cannon fodder) is a little to alien to Westerners, but the game itself has some nice, if unspectacular, touches.

Strider - Most innovative of the CP games, with artificial gravity fields injecting much needed novelty into this combat jumpy-jumpy.

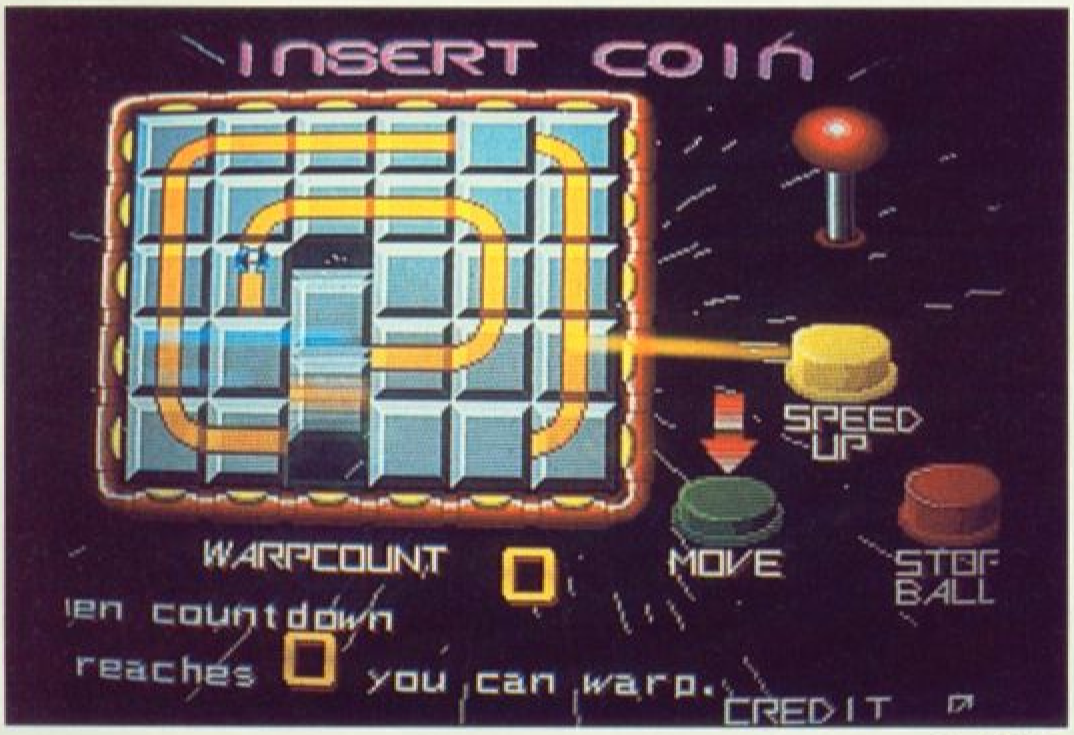
Willow - Licenced from the movie and no relation to the little known Mindscape home format product. Another combat jumpy-jumpy with high graphic content.



▲*Ghouls'n'Ghosts* - Follow up to the smash hit Ghosts n' Goblins, itself a mega hit both on home formats by Elite and in the arcades. The sequel has lovely graphics but shows little enhancement to the original gameplay.



***U.N. Squadron* - latest release on the system, a left-right scrolling shooter, in the mould of Silkworm. Overtly superficial gameplay - but I bet it's got some depth in there somewhere. Choice of three start planes (Jap, Yank and...Danish!).**

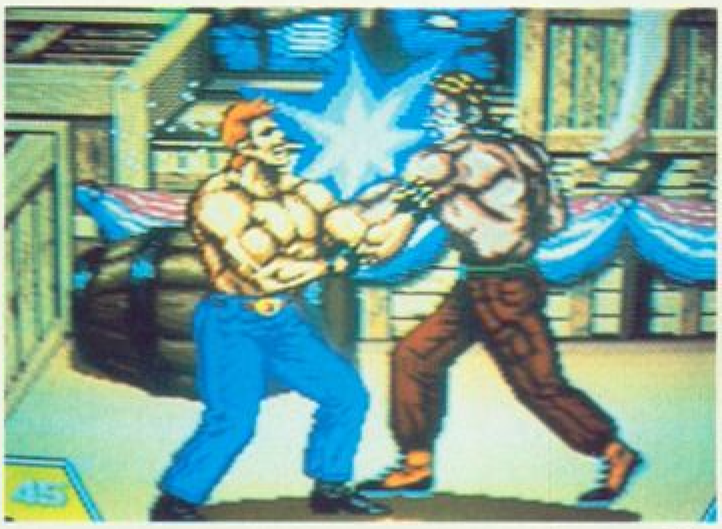


Cue Brick

CUE BRICK

Confused? I was. Incentive bought out a tile variant game on home format about 3 years ago and now a similar thing has turned up on coin-op from Konami.

Cue Brick's another attempt by the coin-op business to come up with a successor to *Tetris* – still reportedly going strong in the arcades of Asia. It's well implemented and a pleasant change for the "disengage frontal lobes" jobs, but it's not intuitive enough to make the same impact as *Tetris*.



Violence Fight

VIOLENCE FIGHT

What else can they do to beat-'em-ups? Make the sprites even bigger, that's what. Current award for huge sprites goes to Taito's *Violence Fight* – which also boasts a complex array of moves, choice of character at the start of the game and painfully realistic punching sounds. Combine this with the "punch it" control system that was experimentally used on *Street Fighter* – and the experience would almost be like going to an England match.

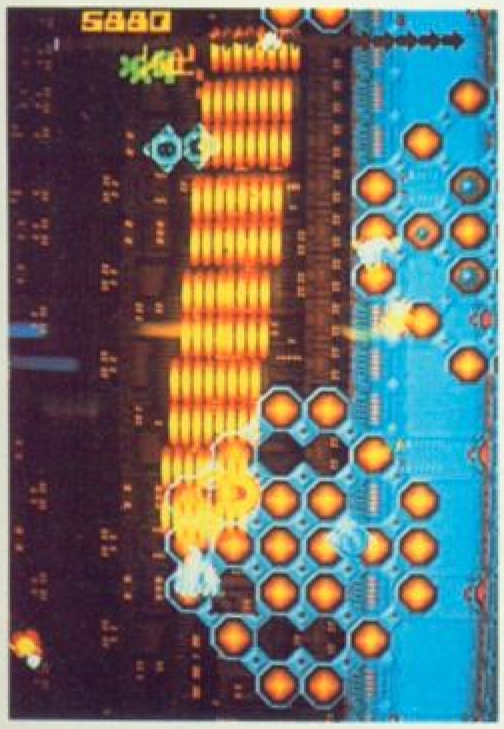
When the punchy version of *Street Fighter* first appeared in Japan, there were stories of elderly gentlement expiring with heart failure as the aggressive instincts of a lifetime suddenly poured out and were unleashed upon the innocent machine. You have been warned...

OMEGA FIGHTER

There will always be games around like *Omega Fighter* – from minor league UPL. Vertical scroll, auto fire and billions of sprites – take me to the funny farm, Daddy.

Auto fire on with lasers, auto off with higher brain functions, you soft focus just in front of the screen so you can take the whole of the area in at one time and get on with the processing required to plot the likely path of enemy sprites and bullets, taking the appropriate evasive action.

Total synthesis with the machine – the vid junkies' Nirvana, I like this one!



Omega Fighter

GAWP AT AWPS

Like any other area of hi-tec, vids have their own trade jargon that can seem very confusing to the outsider. Is that game you're playing JAMMA compatible? Is it a PCB? From now on, we'll run a regular column letting you in on some of the trade terms and secrets...This month – how to tell your AWP's from your SWP's.

AWP – Stands for Amusement with Prizes. And what sort of machine would that be? Well, believe it or not, we are talking about the good old one armed bandit – the fruit. But the name – Amusement with Prizes? Well, it's called Amusement with Prizes because it's for amusement only. In other words -it's rigged. All perfectly up front of course – but inside even the most primitive looking of AWP's is a fairly sophisticated micro that ensures that the machine keeps a precise percentage overall of everything it takes in, that percentage being set (in the UK) by the government.

Play 'em one evening and you might come out on top, play 'em every evening of your life and you may be amused but you'll certainly be out of pocket.

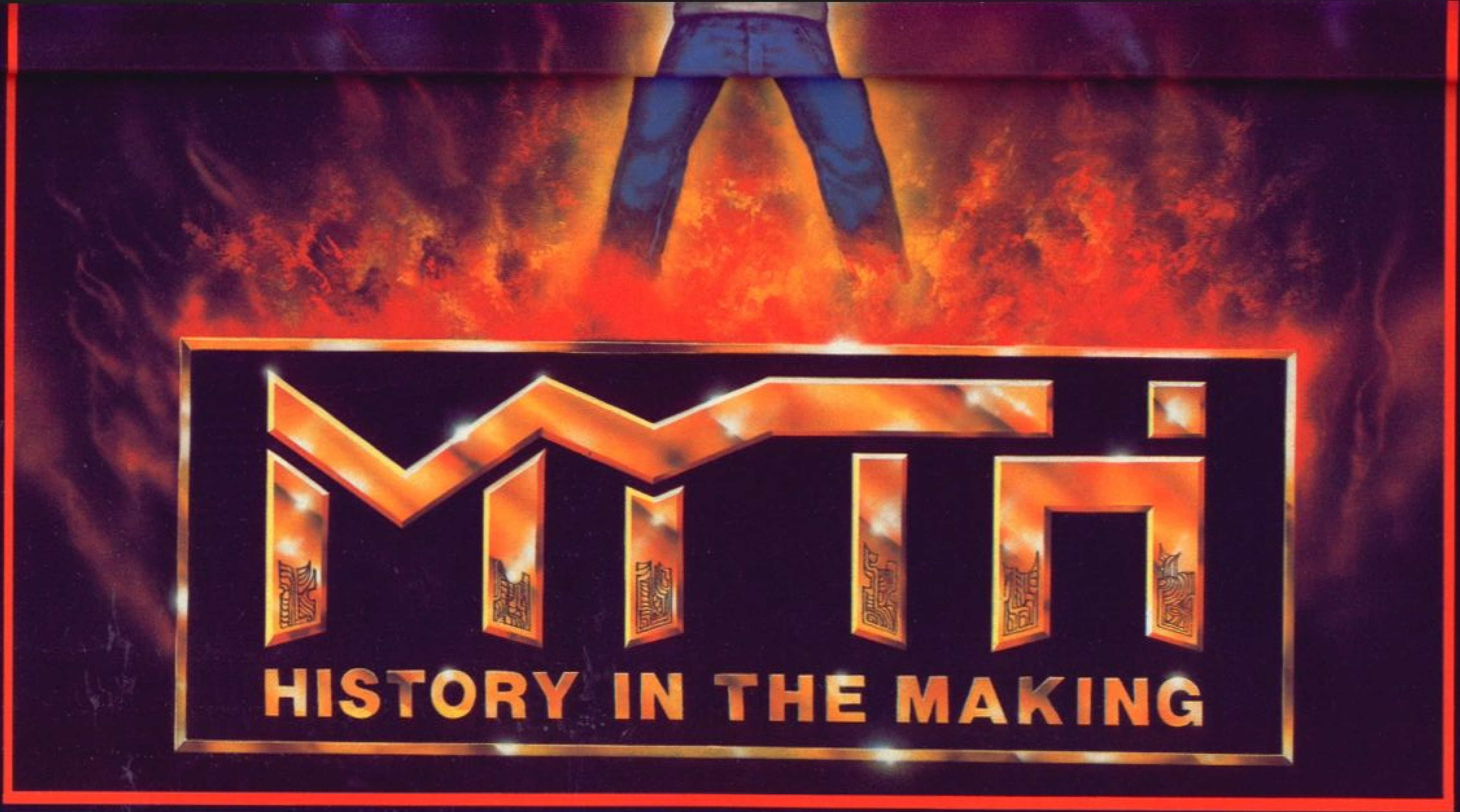
One funny thing about us UK AWP-freaks. Fruits can quite easily be programed to work on a normal TV screen – and many are in the US; in the UK, however, video fruit machines are not popular. It seems that UK punters think that as long as there are mechanical bits inside the AWP's there's a chance they can beat the odds... SUCKERS!!!!!

SWF – now this is more up my street – Skill with Prizes – that category of machine being presently dominated by Trivia SWP's of various types. Put your money in and – assuming that you have a brain the size of a planet – you can walk away with a tenner. And because it's all skill, the operator doesn't need a gaming licence to run it – neat, eh?

Neat, beause if the programming and design of the machine is sophisticated enough you can make sure that, although it's theoretically possible to get serious dosh out of the game, you'd have to be a clairvoyant with the reactions of Bruce Lee to do it!

One particular non-trivia SWP that's hit recently is a hi-tec version of the old card sharp's trick – Find the Lady. Four electronic 'cards' are laid out before you and flipped over very quickly. When they stop you have to select which one was the last to be turned over.

Theoretically this is a skill-based game, but when the flipping gets to be sufficiently fast, the game becomes a straight-forward turkey shoot. This is because 'vision persistence' (the tendency of the eye – which makes image animation possible – to retain an image for 1/10th second) starts to set in and for most mortals it is simply not possible to tell which card was flipped when. Nice idea – and no gaming licence needed here, your honour.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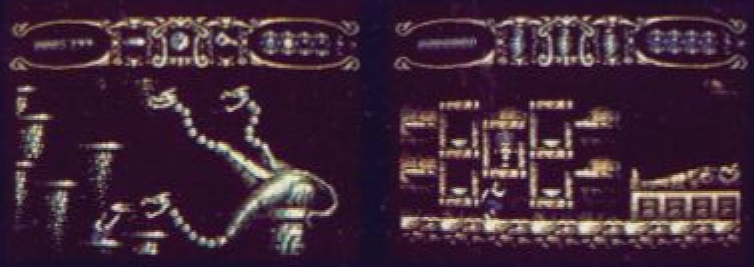
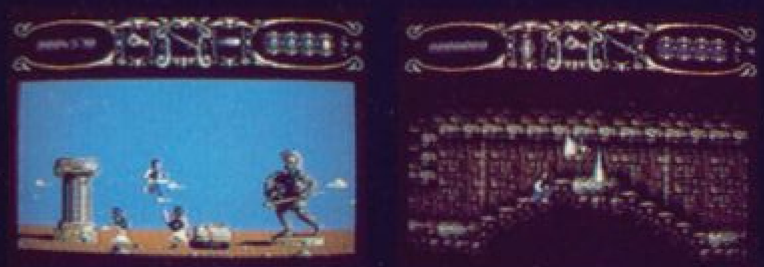
Actual C.64 Screenshots





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THE SECRET'S OUT!

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SCORE

NEC's blockbusting PC Engine has been re-engineered by a British company to produce a fully-operational UK version. Classic arcade action is now only £199 pounds away!

The PC Engine has been driving up the adrenalin levels of committed gamesplayers for almost two years. Now, at last, you can get your mits on a neat little UK conversion that really delivers the goods.

News of the Engine didn't filter through to Britain from Japan until just over a year ago. and since then there have been a number of unauthorised imports of varying degrees of quality. People have snapped them up, however – the system's tech specs were pretty impressive when the machine appeared, although the unit faces tough opposition from the Sega Megadrive (due here next Easter) and the yet-to-appear Konix, both of which are technically superior.

> **'We are desperate to promote the PC Engine the way it should be...as a fully-functional equivalent of NEC's block-busting Japanese version. If NEC were to do it themselves, we'd be delighted to support it, but in the meantime the PC Engine Plus has to be the only alternative for the UK games enthusiast.'**
>
> ***James Dexter***

However, it's the games that have got the boys clamouring for Engines. For some reason, the NEC machine has generated some superb titles – probably something to do with its success in Japan – and the range of software, combined with the technical excellence of the games, makes the machine a very attractive proposition.

But there's a problem. The only Engines on sale in this country have been Japanese imports. These machines expect not only a different power supply, but also a different (NTSC) TV system to output through. Dealers have got round this problem by adding on various dongles that convert the UK mains voltage to the required levels and output a proper PAL TV signal...

At least, that's what the dongles are meant to do. The trouble is that all too often they are of inferior quality and degrade the performance of the machine. The resulting problems all hit the machine right where it hurts: on the gamesplaying front (see the Engine Trouble panel on this page).

Enter Mention and Active Sales & Marketing. James Dexter of Mention reckoned the PC Engine deserved a better showing in the UK and together with Active's Robert Stallibrass they set about producing a machine that would give UK gamesplayers the true Engine experience. Importing units from Japan, they've re-engineered them and turned out something they call the PC Engine Plus.

Although it doesn't have the official blessing of NEC, the Plus gives you everything you'd expect from an authorised UK Engine. Mention have, aided by Warwick Electronics' Mike Phillips, provided a quality power supply and – most importantly – re-engineered the TV output and made alterations to the case that ensure the Engine blasts away to its full potential. The result is a neat little unit that will accept all the official peripherals (many other UK versions can't, because you have to plug in a PAL booster) and – most importantly – delivers a needle sharp display. And it costs £199.99, cheaper than many less impressive offerings...

ARCADE MANIA

James Dexter of Mention Technical Services is nothing if not an arcade freak. Hot on the heels of the PC Engine Plus will be an extraordinary beast called the Personal Arcade Plus. This little number (big number, actually) gives you a complete coin-op look-alike arcade machine in your own home – all you do is plug in your Sega, Nintendo, PC Engine, or Atari console and the inbuilt circuitry takes over, giving you a nice little blasting corner in the sitting room. Doubtless, the enterprising punters will fit their own coin slots and call the neighbours round.

Mention also distribute imported Sega Megadrives, claiming them to be the only models fully compatible with the Genesis software range and with future UK software (to be released when Virgin launch their version next year).

ENGINE TROUBLE

Typical problems experience with unauthorised PC Engine's in the UK are generally caused by either an unreliable power supply or a poor quality modulator.

The basic system requires an input from the power supply of around 9 to 10 volts. However, many supplies tested by Mention were actually outputting as much as 12 or 13 volts. This isn't going to stop the machine from working, but it has a whole load of knock-on effects.

The first thing that happens is that the Engine's regulator, which receives this current and outputs it at a steady 5 volts, begins to overheat and drive out more current. This in turn affects the modulator, which itself begins to overheat and send more current to the display – and at this point you really begin to notice it. For example, the PC Engine can display 16 colours at once and change those colours very rapidly, giving the effect in a game of having a very large colour capability. This is often used on, say, large end-of-level aliens where the programmer might draw upon several different shades ``from the red area of the palette to produce a delicately shaded beastie.

Unfortunately, red just has to be one of the areas of the display spectrum most affected by current fluctuation, and instead of delicate shades, with an overheating modulator, all you're likely to get are smudgy pink, or smudgy red, or smudgy white. Not only that, but 'vision buzz' can set in, with the image quivering in sync with the soundtrack. Not very attractive. And then there are associated problems of a 'rolling' display, or or other subtle scrolling effects that weren't exactly what the programmer intended.

Any PC Engine sold in the UK (since NEC have yet to produce a proper Euro-version) is going to have to tackle these problems. The PC Engine Plus has certainly succeeded better than most – and without any dongles. The quality of the display is excellent and the unit doesn't overheat. Definitely a good buy for Engine freaks and game enthusiasts alike..

SYSTEM SUPPORT

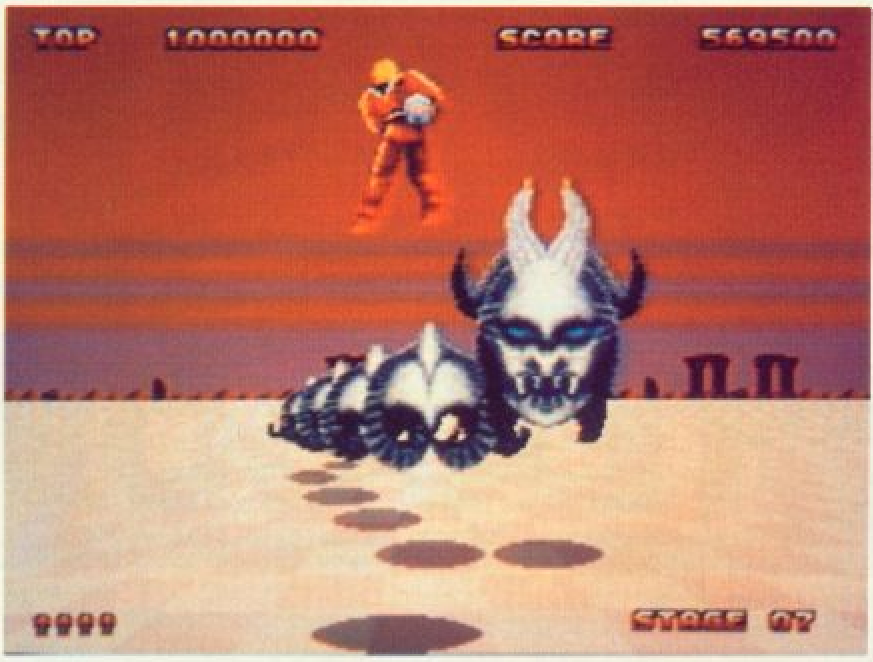
As the console scene begins to hot up, the contention between the PC Engine and the Sega 16 bit Megadrive grows by the day. Although neither machine is officially available in this country there are a great deal of suppliers already selling both. Assuming that you've already decided to add a console to your collection, and that a Nintendo or a Konix is not for you, should you rev an Engine or drive a Megadrive?

The deciding factors have to be support and software. The Megadrive is likely to be launched officially by Virgin in this country around Easter 1990. Virgin have already given a good deal of support to the Sega Mastersystem and will doubtless continue the tradition with the Megadrive. You can expect a steady release of software and perhaps even a regular magazine to back up your purchase.

The NEC PC Engine is a more doubtful prospect on the support side. NEC themselves have still not decided whether to support the European market or not, and this long delay would seem to indicate that the company is more interested in Japan and the USA than in Europe. If this is the case, we can hardly expect much support from them even if they do officially release the product here. The same thing happened with the Nintendo, which – although 'officially' launched here some time ago has had a very chequered history and is only now getting anything like the support it needs.

The PC Engine Plus, although an excellent product, is still an 'unauthorised' import and the companies producing it are unlikely to be able to ship many units. In some respects this may help on the support side – you're more likely to get individual attention – but in the long term it means that the machine is unlikely to achieve the sales needed for widespread grass-roots support, dedicated magazines, and so on...

PC ENGINE VS MEGADRIVE



Space Harrier 2 follows in the same vein as the original as far as game play is concerned, but that is where the similarity ends. The graphics and speed would put the coin op original to shame. Even really huge sprites glide around the screen without slowing down, leaving nothing to detract from the hectic atmosphere induced while playing. The sound complements the quality of the game with some excellent tunes and the best digitised speech to date. Although *Space Harrier 2* is the most impressive game of its kind, it hardly stretches the Megadrive to its limits and as good as it may be, it is only likely to attract fans of the original.

Gamepower is what it's all about, so, you'll probably ignore the question of support altogether (see panel opposite) and make your decision entirely on the basis of the sprite movements in *Alien Chain-Saw Champion*. A man (or a woman) after our own hearts...

The PC Engine already has an extensive software base, compared to the modest amount of titles available for the Megadrive, but is quality more important than quantity? Sega obviously don't think so – in fact they don't seem to think of the Engine as a great threat since they have allowed versions of some of their own titles to be released for it, a rare concession in the console world where the usual rule is 'my machine, my games, and everyone keep off'.

Sega's *Space Harrier* – the hugely successful 3D shoot-em-up – has been converted for a great many machines but the PC Engine version is closest to the arcade original. The scrolling is beautifully smooth and the speed of some levels is positively nerve racking. The graphics are almost identical to the coin op and all the levels are present.

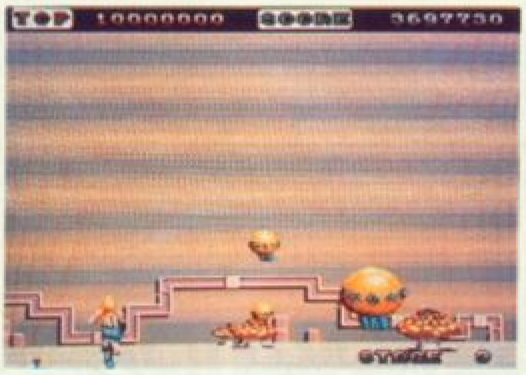
The sound on *Space Harrier*, however, is quite poor compared to other titles on the Engine and although all the speech is there, none of it is intelligible! If you now look at the Megadrive, however, you'll find that Sega have chosen not to release *Space Harrier* at all, but instead have created *Space Harrier 2*.

The first game which shows what the Megadrive can do is *Ghouls and Ghosts*, a conversion of Capcom's arcade classic; the sequel to *Ghosts and Goblins*. Taking the role of Arthur the Knight, you run, jump and shoot your way through ten levels to kill Lucifer and rescue the princess. This is a perfect adaptation of the coin op, both graphically and audibly, the only difference being that you don't have to feed it your hard earned cash. *Ghouls and Ghosts* is quite simply one of the best platform games available in the home.

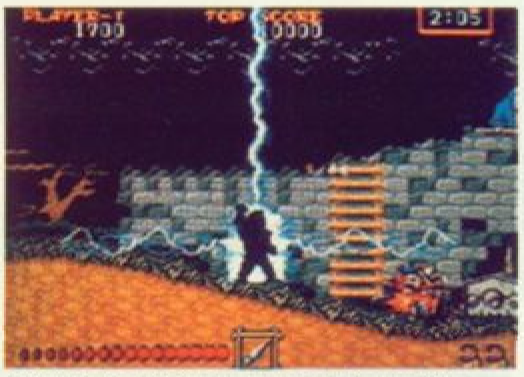
The PC Engine may not be able to beat the Megadrive in the platform game stakes, but it does have the best shoot-em-up you can buy, in the shape of *Gunhead*. *Gunhead* is a vertical blast with the most awesome array of weapons seen in a game. There are nine extremely long levels, each containing guardians which must be defeated if you are to progress any further.

You can't buy a Konix (yet), you want something beefier than a Nintendo, and you're a games connoisseur. In fact, you're a fussy, alien-bashing so-and-so. Which games powerhouse should you go for?

Although *Gunhead* is a touch on the easy side, it is never boring since the pace is always fast and furious. However, if the ease of play does not appeal it is also the only game I know of with a cheat mode that makes the game more difficult!



◄ *Space Harrier* on the PC Engine.



***Ghouls and Ghosts* on the Megadrive.**

To declare one of these machines superior, would be difficult and misleading. The Megadrive is the more technically advanced, but the software and peripheral support is relatively poor. The PC Engine, on the other hand, has a large range of software available and peripherals which include the already popular CD ROM player.

Which of the two consoles to buy is a matter of preference and patience. If you are looking for a high quality range of top class software, you would have to opt for the established PC Engine. However, if you are willing to hold out for a few months until the Sega releases become more frequent and Virgin hopefully supports the machine, you may decide that it was well worth the wait

SOFTWARE FOR THE ENGINE: WAS IT WORTH THE WAIT?

At last a technically reliable PC Engine has appeared for the UK market. The technical superiority of the hardware is not worth anything, however, unless the software available for the machine comes up to scratch. Here we present an overview of a selection of the software currently available for the PC Engine in this country and address the question on most game players lips: 'Was it worth the wait?'

R-TYPE

R-Type began life as a hit arcade game from Irem Corporation. It was the first shoot-em-up to really make use of power-ups for the players craft. The add-ons available in the game are not merely gimmicks, but essential if you are to complete the game. The game is practically indistinguishable from the original. Great graphics, great sound, and plays like a dream.

The only problem with R-type is that it won't fit on one cartridge. Hudson Soft have put the game on two cartridges (three levels on each). Both cartridges are available separately, but you will have to pay twice as much if you want the whole game.

POWER LEAGUE II

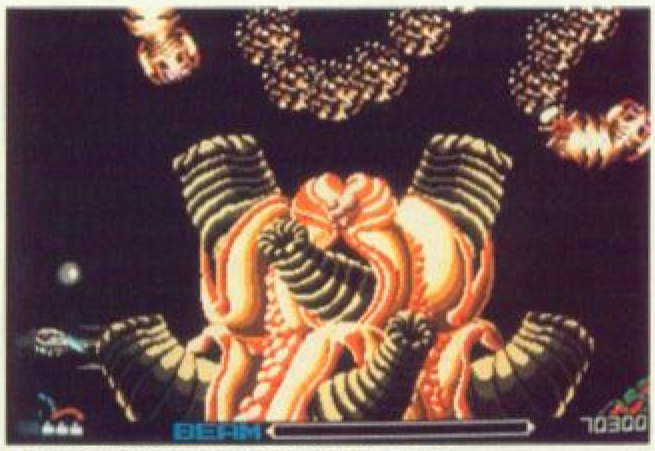
This game is a simulation of Baseball featuring extremely nice 3D graphics. In terms of sheer attractiveness nothing on the ST or Amiga comes close except Cinemaware's TV Sports: Football. The appearance of this title is good news for prospective and existing PC Engine owners since it is an indication that the machine is attracting more than just conversions of arcade games.

LEGENDARY AXE

This is a fairly standard platform game, very similar in atmosphere to Elite's aging game, Beyond the Ice Palace. This was quite an early release for the PC Engine and has now been superseded by much better software, unless you are a real platform addict I can't really recommend this one.

CYBER CROSS

This is another early release, but thankfully it is a lot more playable than Legendary Axe. This one is a martial arts type game set in the not too distant future. It is certainly nothing special. There have been many martial arts beat-em-ups appearing over recent years, and Cyber Cross doesn't really offer anything that you haven't seen before. Having said that, it is a reasonably competent effort.



A typical end-of-levl nasty in *R-Type*.

PACLAND

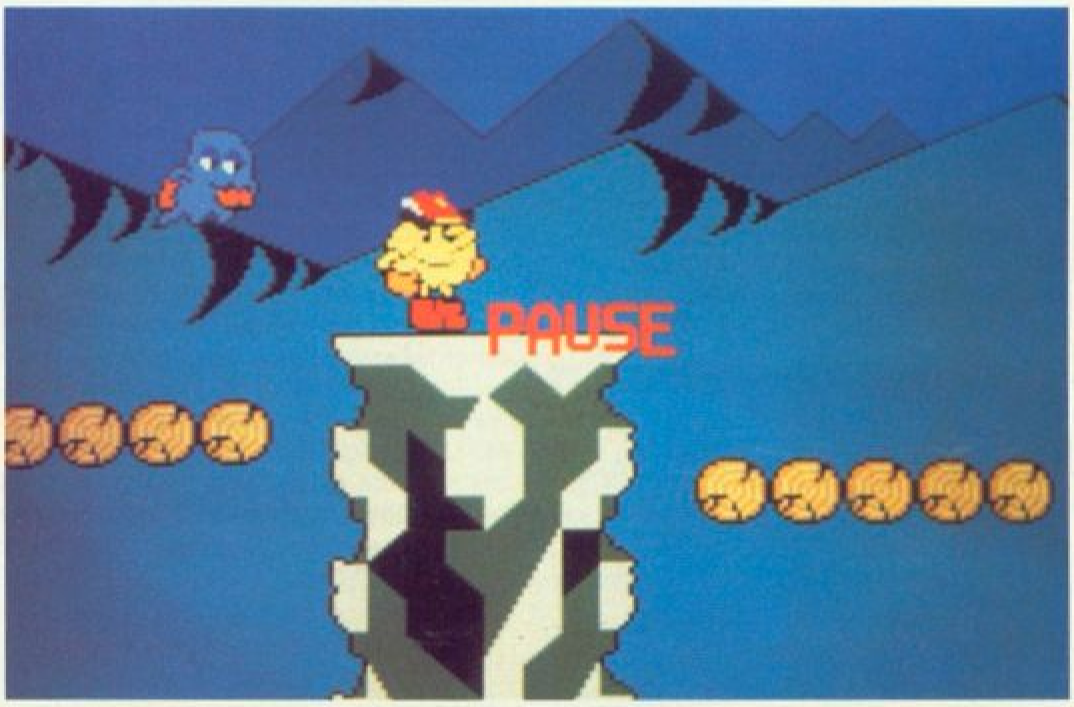
The original Pacland arcade game from Namco is getting on a bit in years now, not to mention the Pac characters who inhabit it. Nevertheless it is still quite a good game, and should appeal to younger players as well as old timers. It is nice to see that a few old favourites are being launched for the Engine as well as the very latest releases. Let's hope even more are forthcoming.

GUNHED

As a vertically scrolling, collect the add-ons, shoot-em-up Gunhed holds no surprises. It's very fast, and very colourful, but other than that there's not really a lot here to hold the interest. There are already some far superior shoot-em-ups available for the Engine (witness R-Type), so it is difficult to see this having much appeal for Engine owners.

FINAL LAP

This is at first sight a three-dimensional racing game a la Pole Position but also seems to have a quest of some sort involved. We didn't actually get to play all of this one because of a slight complication: None of us can read Japanese! Incidentally, this is one of the pitfalls of buying PC Engine software at present, although admittedly this was the first game that presented complications.



Pacman's looking pleased with himself in *Pacland*, but not for long...

SIDEARMS

Sidearms is a conversion of an ancient but enjoyable sideways-scrolling shoot-em-up, which once again involves rearming yourself with more and more powerful weaponry. The action is certainly fast and very, very hard. But the game also has an addictive 'just one more time appeal'.

THE NINJA WARRIORS

A good conversion of a rather more recent martial-arts game from Taito. There is a slight twist to this one in that the ninja's in question are robots, and as you get damaged sections of gleaming metal are rather ominously revealed. It certainly warrants a look if you like combat games.

IN CONCLUSION

Looking at the titles currently available for the Engine the impression you are left with is that the good majority of games released are going to be arcade conversions. The Engine is, however, superbly suited to this type of game so at least what you get will be acceptably close to the originals.

Titles like Power League II and Final Lap are indications that there might be one or two games that break the mould, and Pacland is a good sign that there will be one or two golden oldies rearing their ancient heads.

Obviously because the Engine is not yet officially available for the UK, British owners are going to have to put up with software aimed at the Japanese Market. This means Japanese instruction booklets and Japanese on-screen messages in some games. Whether this situation will change in the near future remains to be seen. But you can rest assured that what is currently available for the Engine was definitely worth waiting for.

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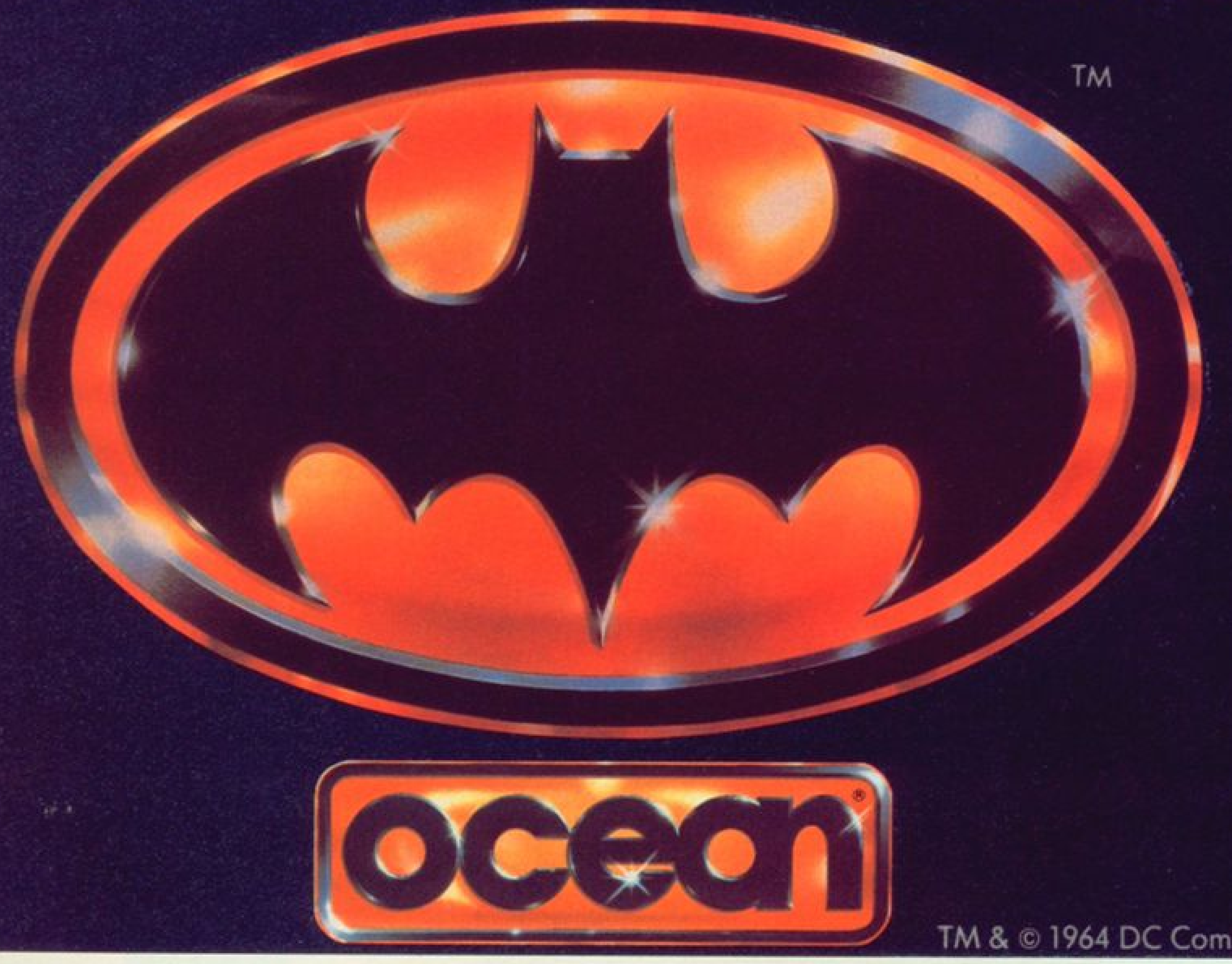

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POWER DRIFT

IN POLE POSITION...

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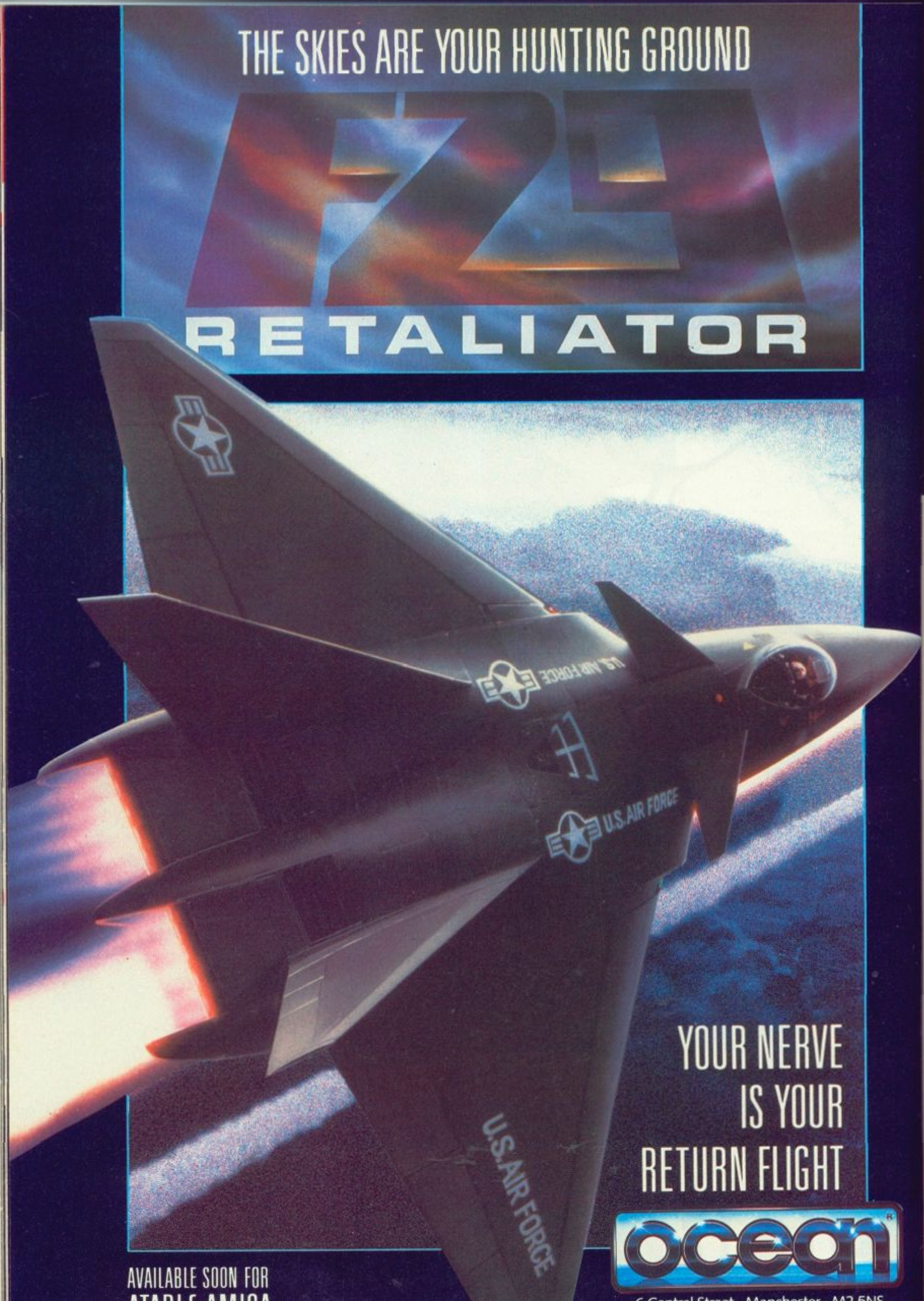
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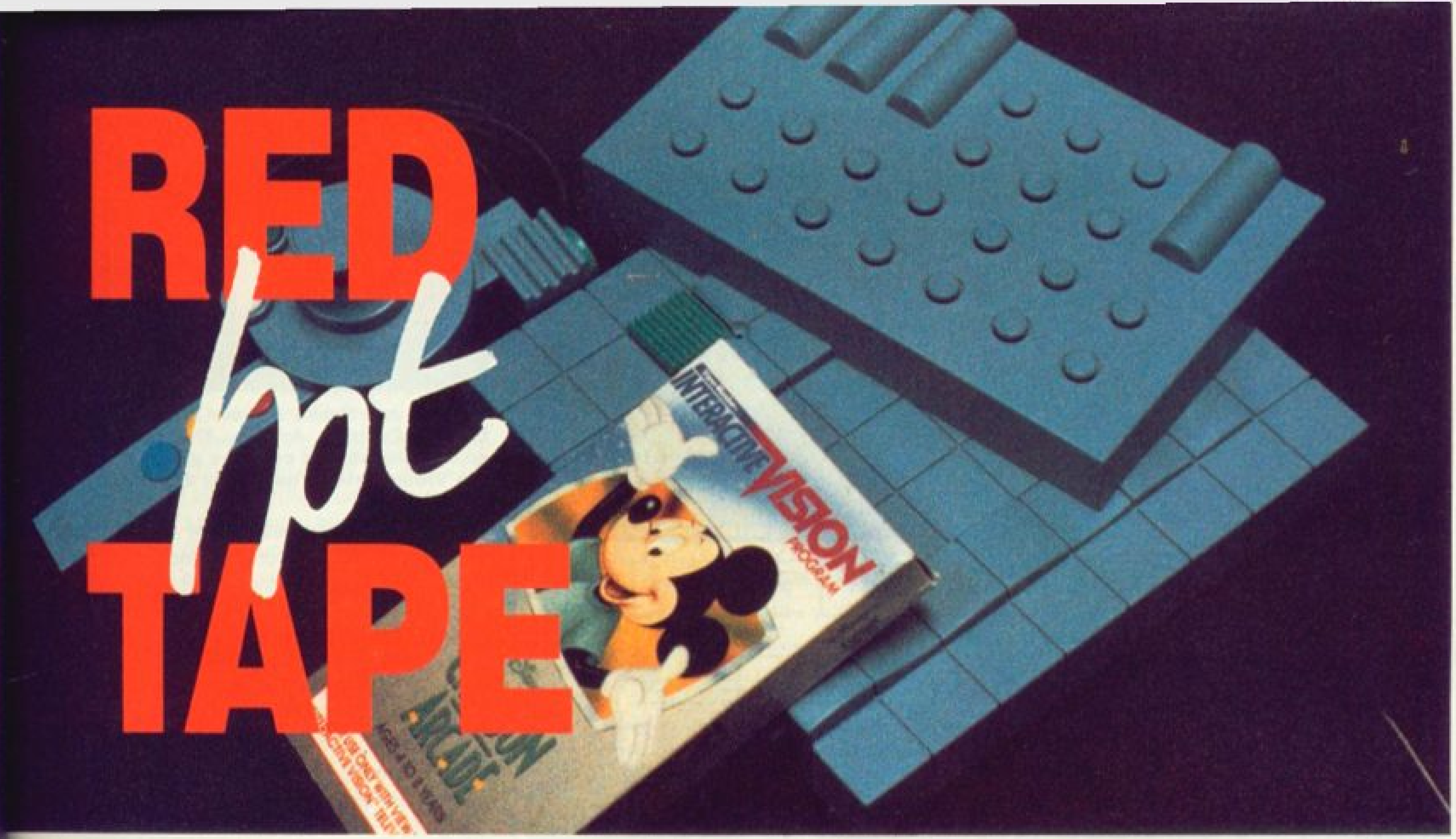
RED *hot* TAPE



If you thought that all you did with VCR's was watch *The Fly* and *Gone with the Wind*, think again. John Cook checks out a box of tricks that can turn the humble vid into a powerful games system...

In the field of consumer electronics, the success story of the decade, on both sides of the Atlantic, has to be the Video Tape Recorder. Probably the most sophisticated piece of electronic equipment ever to enter the home, the VCR has rocketed from zero percent market penetration in the seventies to the present, almost saturation level. How many people do you know with a TV without a VCR?

Of course, the dream of the marketing entrepreneur – once a piece of equipment is installed into the home – is to get an associated piece of hardware installed next to it as fast as possible, to enhance the utility of the original machine and prolong its useful life. But after head cleaners, dust covers and aerobics tapes, where the hell do you go with a VCR?

The problem is that in its unadulterated form, watching a video is a completely passive experience and the medium itself totally sequential – you sit there and watch a prerecorded tape from the beginning right through to the end. What the VCR lacks, baring the odd intervention with the remote control, is that magical attribute, interactivity.

Video cameras, it's true, have allowed the cinematically gifted consumer to put down his own images on tape but, once the image is captured and in the can, the control over the image itself is limited – unless you have full access to the editing suite and even then you still haven't got past the problem of the complete lack of interactivity.

So what are millions of consumers unknowingly waiting for? Interactive VCR, that's what, and the whole concept is a lot closer to coming to market than you can imagine, with the first unit just launched onto the market in the USA this month – the Ideal Viewmaster System. And if you're thinking that this is of no interest at all, you're wrong. Interactive VCR isn't necessarily all about corporate training schemes – it's about games, since most of those VCR's in the home are there for one reason: entertainment. The big boys know when they're on to a good one...

THE COST

The Viewmaster is aimed primarily at younger gamesters, and although it's certainly not the total fulfilment of the promise of what Interactive VCR can offer, it's definitely a step in the right direction, demonstrating the basic principles that will apply to systems following on – if and when they happen.

Priced at under $100 retail, the Viewmaster can overlay computer graphics onto a video image, letting you play simple games side by side with cartoon or TV images. The code for the games is encoded on the Video tape, interleaved with the Video signal, so the units "know" what point the tape is at in the run – and so when to end the game and start loading the code of another.

In effect, the interactivity is limited to the player and the graphics, with the video images serving to introduce the various games and act as backgrounds to them, so its usefulness is limited, but it does serve to show that the principle of Interactive VCR can work, and work well. Early laser disk games worked in much the same way, overlaying a computer generated image of a space-ship on an exotic video landscape. They were pretty naff by today's standards, but the boffins have something up their sleeves that could change everything...

HYPER-INTERACTIVE

These other systems, presently under wraps, are truly interactive and can produce fabulous results. Unfortunately we can't, for legal reasons, mention the unit by name – so we'll call it System X. Check this out and get excited...

System X has four independently accessible tracks of video on a single tape with 12 tracks of sound. There's a sophisticated controller so all the tracks can by displayed simultaneously, if necessary, with complete control over the viewing window (or windows) size plus a high resolution graphics overlay capability. This is the kind of spec that makes professional game designers drool – it does truly give you a chance of true interactivity – the kind that is only in prototype with CDI at present.

IVT VS CDI

Both Interactive Video Tape and Compact Disk Interactive are still in their infancy – but it would be a foolish prophet to write either of them off, or mark one far superior than the other. On the face of it, CDI has to win hands down. 600 Meg of random access data, a powerful 68000 based machine and the might of big electronics companies behind it. But look what happened between Laservision and VCR in the past.

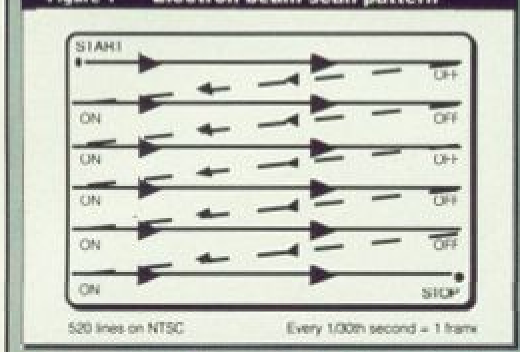
Price is a powerful factor, and it's well known that if CDI comes to market in the next year, you are going to have to fork out in excess of £1000 to grab it, initially. That's a lot. And CDI, in its present configuration, still finds it difficult to animate a whole screen of video convincingly.

Tape has no problem with this, but its sequential access is more tricky to handle and certainly more limted – Interactive VCR would need a 4 track system to truly compete. The technology is there, and a high end Interactive VCR system would retail at less than £300 – if only the will was there. Interesting, eh?

HOW VIEWMASTER WORKS

Exactly how do you make VCR interactive? It's not easy, but with a little technological know-how, it can be done. The Viewmaster system is relatively low tech, with a single video track that is constantly running, the normal audio track, and an extra track of digital sound – used for game codes and sound effects squeezed in on what is called the Vertical Blanking Interval (see figure 1).

Figure 1 **Electron beam scan pattern**

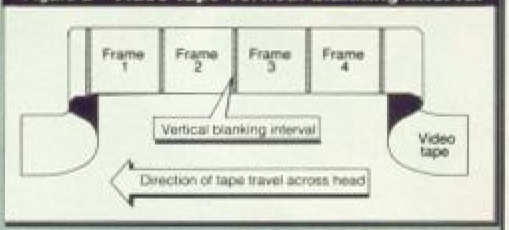


The electron beam scans the phosphor screen from top to bottom, stimulating the phosphor to produce light. By altering the intensity of the beam as it travels, areas of light and dark are built up, creating the visual image. When the beam reaches the STOP point, it has to travel back to the START.

This is the area of the screen beyond the usual scan of the beam that makes up the TV picture every 30th of a second. In fact, it's the area where, on a UK TV picture, the Teletext information is displayed, needing, of course, a decoder to display the information as actual screens of text.

It's easier to think of VBI like this when you think of tape – it takes a finite time for the beam to make its way from the bottom right of the screen back up to the start of the next frame at the top left. Considering that the tape is running at a constant speed while this is happening, it means you have a small area of tape between each frame, which you can use as you wish. (See Fig 2).

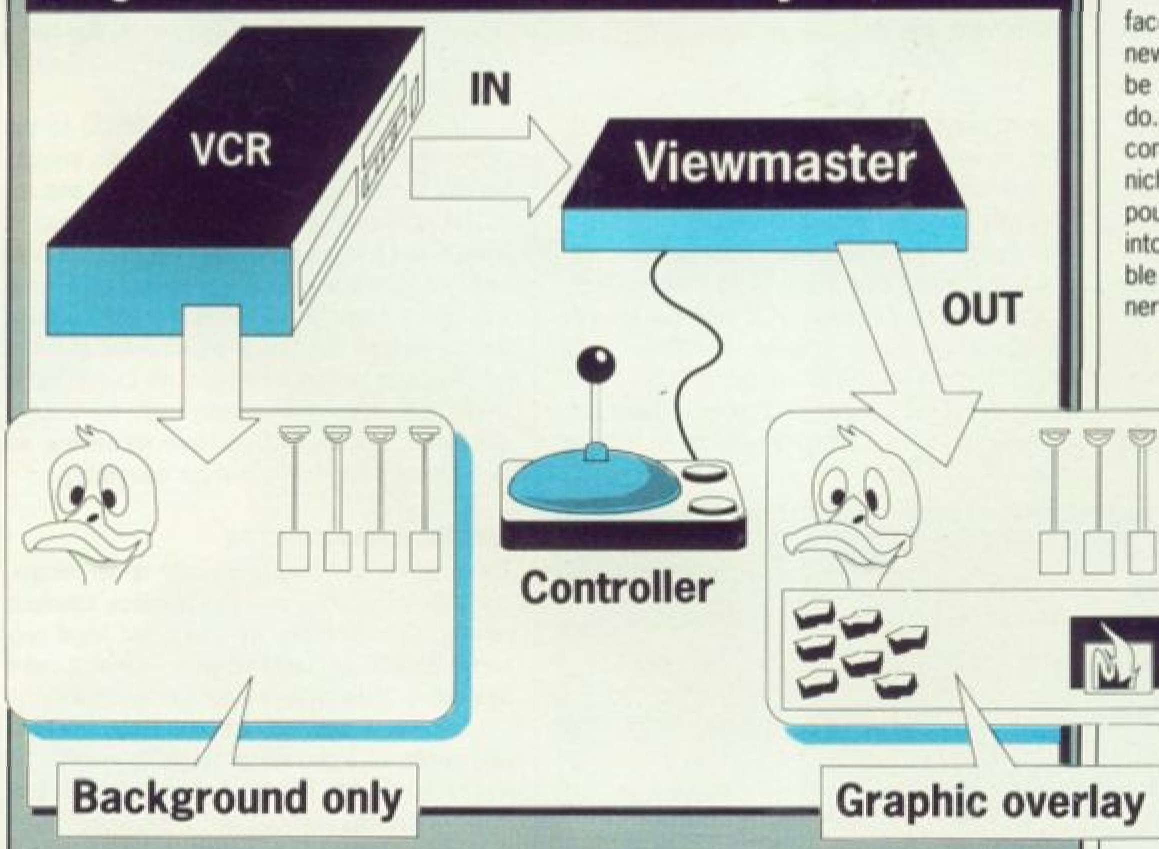
Figure 2 **Video tape vertical blanking interval**


Frame 1
Frame 2
Frame 3
Frame 4
Vertical blanking interval
Video tape
Direction of tape travel across head

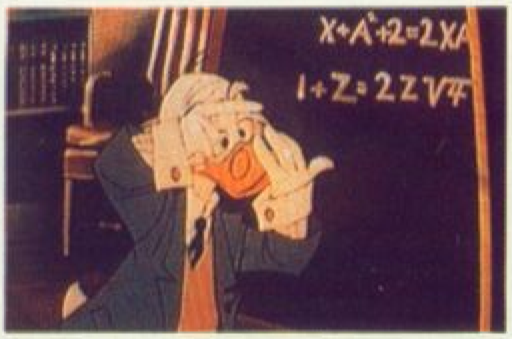
The tiny time gap as the electron beam flies from the bottom of the screen back to the top is the secret to interactive video techniques, providing a 'window' for data to be transmitted and processed by the Viewmaster unit. On tape, it is represented by the Vertical Blanking Interval (VBI).

In the case of Viewmaster, it's used to carry the program code to the download to the Viewmaster unit, exactly like you'd load a program into any tape based computer – only as it's giving the information in the gap between TV frames (and not on the audio channel either, remember) – the loading of the program is completely transparent to the user.

Figure 3 **The Viewmaster system**



The Viewmaster isn't much more complicated than, say, a Spectrum. It's a graphics generating device that sits between the VCR and the TV with electronics to Genlock its own graphics onto the VCR's video picture. It's these graphics that form the interactive part of the experience, with the video forming the background and a link between the games. When the time for a game has elapsed, the old program code is dumped, and new code downloaded for a new game, while the game itself is being "introduced" by a new section of video action. Simple, but effective.



Ludwig von Drake is your host on The Disney Cartoon Arcade...The message on the blackboard could be generated by the Viewmaster if gameplay demanded...

This technology has already been developed by an 'American company' (no names, no pack drill) and could hit the market right now at a price point of about £200. Interested? Who wouldn't be! The trouble with this baby, however, is that the system has outgrown the original backers' expectations....and now they don't know what to do with it. Wealthy techno freaks are cordially *invited to send eight figure* cheques into the Ace editorial offices and we'll do our best to put you in touch with the relevant group!

Joking aside, this level of technology, this level of interactivity, does seem (inexplicably) to throw normally semi-sane marketing executives into paroxysms of catatonic seizure. The problem is, there has never been the kind of interactivity we are talking about here in a consumer electronic product. And few people have the confidence in the intelligence of the general public and the vision in design and exploitation terms, to realise the full potential such a system could have. In the eyes of the men in suits, us video users have square eyes, pinhead brains, and are only able to understand words beginning with 'Aaghghg!' or 'Mmmmmm!'.

System X is stuck with the same problem faced by CDI and similar technologies – it is so new and so, potentially, revolutionary that it can be made to do almost anything you want it to do....the only thing it can't do is be stuck in a comfortable and easily classifiable marketing niche. In a situation where many millions of pounds must be spent to bring such a system into fruition, the nebulous quality of such flexible systems make execs and backers alike, nervous. Very nervous.

So that is the state of play with Interactive VCR at present. One simple – but effective for its target audience – system on the market now. At least one technically advanced system waiting for someone to do something with it. And millions of consumers with VCRs waiting for something that will change their video tape machine into a games machine. Or a powerful educational tool. Or an exciting information provider. Or anything that anyone with enough imagination can program it for. If only the Cosmic Remote Control had a Fast Forward...

THE CINEMAWARE CONNECTION

So much for the hardware – but what about the software?

Ideal – backers of the Viewmaster – originally approached Disney to produce a game for the system using the world famous Disney characters, such as Donald Duck, Goofy and everyone's favourite rodent, Mickey Mouse. Having no experience in the game field, who else should Disney approach in turn to produce it for them, but the 'masters of the interactive movie on computer' – the Cinemaware Corporation?

Experience and expertise gained through producing classic games like *Defender of the Crown* and *Rocket Ranger* proved useful for the company, who handed over the project to its Interactive Dept, headed up by ex-rock star, movie maker David Riordan. Design and production was done in-house, with the actual programming of the Viewmaster unit done by Ideal technicians. After, 'trying a bunch of ideas' and six months of hard work, the Disney Cartoon Arcade was born.

The tape is a series of 9 simple arcade games (mostly overlaid on video) linked together by cartoon footage introduced by Disney character Ludwig von Drake.

In fact, although the running commentary made by Ludwig is all about the Viewmaster and tell you how to play all the games, only existing cartoon footage was used by Cinemaware – it was carefully selected and re-dubbed by Disney to a newly written script. The effect is very convincing.

GETTING FIRED UP

Ludwig introduces a segment of cartoon classics – such as Goofy trying to shovel coal into a furnace – and then goes on to explain how the game works. Coal and furnace graphics are now overlaid onto the bottom half of the screen and the user has to try and fire the coal into the furnace, while the furnace door is open – using the controller. After a set period of time (all the game activity must be ended at exactly the right time or the overlay effect would be spoilt) the game ends, Ludwig goes into his next routine and the unit remembers your score.

At the end of all nine games (around 30 minutes of elapsed time), you are given a total score and invited to play again. Simple, but effective – kids of the target age range love the idea of cartoon characters actually talking to them and enjoy the challenge of the basic hand/eye and puzzle games.

Ideal must have liked the final result too – the Cinemaware-designed Disney tape is bundled with the machine, with extra tapes (six others in all) featuring Sesame Street and Muppet characters weighing in at around $25.

WHEN WILL WE GET IT?

The Viewmaster concept was developed as far back as 1985 with the Belgium firm of Sydec originally planning a four track system. This was soon cut down to the single track that now exists to keep it in the price bracket suitable for the toy market – below $100.

Dave Riordan of Cinemaware

Major development of the system went from 1986 to 1988, with the unit now coming to market in Fall 1989. The principle concept of Audio Switching was developed by Michael Freeman of ACTV in New York, along with Eric Schmit of Sydec. Other key engineers working on the project included Eric Beck, Tina Eden and Heri Joyaux, along with Gary Evans who was responsible for the inclusion of the colour graphics chip...the unit was originally designed with a black and white overlay display in mind.

Gary himself is confident in the future of both the product and the underlying concept – 'It seems to us that interactive television is inevitable', he states, although at the same time worried that the complexity of the concept makes advertising and marketing a real problem – having to rely at the end of the day on simple word of mouth endorsement.

When will the Viewmaster be on sale in Europe? Long term plans exist, but it all depends on the initial success of the unit in the US and Japan. Converting the system to PAL and SECAM TV standards is possible, but not easy, due to different resolutions and frame rates. Only time will tell whether it makes the big jump over the pond.

SYSTEM X

Getting four tracks, onto a piece of video tape is much harder and requires a fair amount of electronic wizardry to both accomplish the feat and switch freely between them. What happens is this...

On the video tape itself the information for each 'track' is not sequential, but interleaved between information for other tracks (see Fig 4). Thus the information for Track 1 is found on frames 1, 5, 9, 13, etc. That for Track 2 on frames 2, 6, 10, 14, and so on. Of course, the VBI is still used to carry code to program the System X unit, which selects which tracks to display, and how to process them. As desired, all or any of the tracks can be played at once...or repeated over and over if you wanted, each in its separately sized window or just filling the screen like a normal TV picture.

As well as being able to select between tracks – as allowed by the program – the System X unit can overlay complex graphics onto the video image/s, which can be under the control of the user – as in a game – or just used as a scoreboard or other type of graphic overlay. The overhead in interleaving the frames in this fashion is a reduced frame rate on screen, but the lowest that System X goes to, even when displaying all four tracks at once is 15 frames per second – only marginally worse than NTSC quality and still pretty good by standard video game standards when you consider the image quality of the VCR.

Figure 4 **System X Video tape**

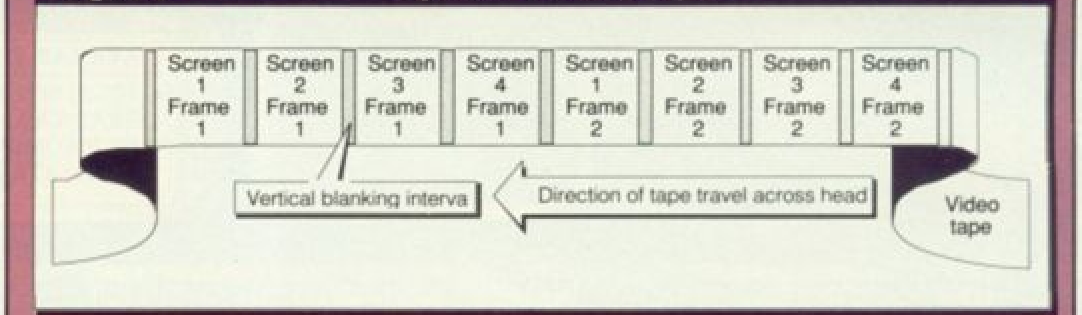
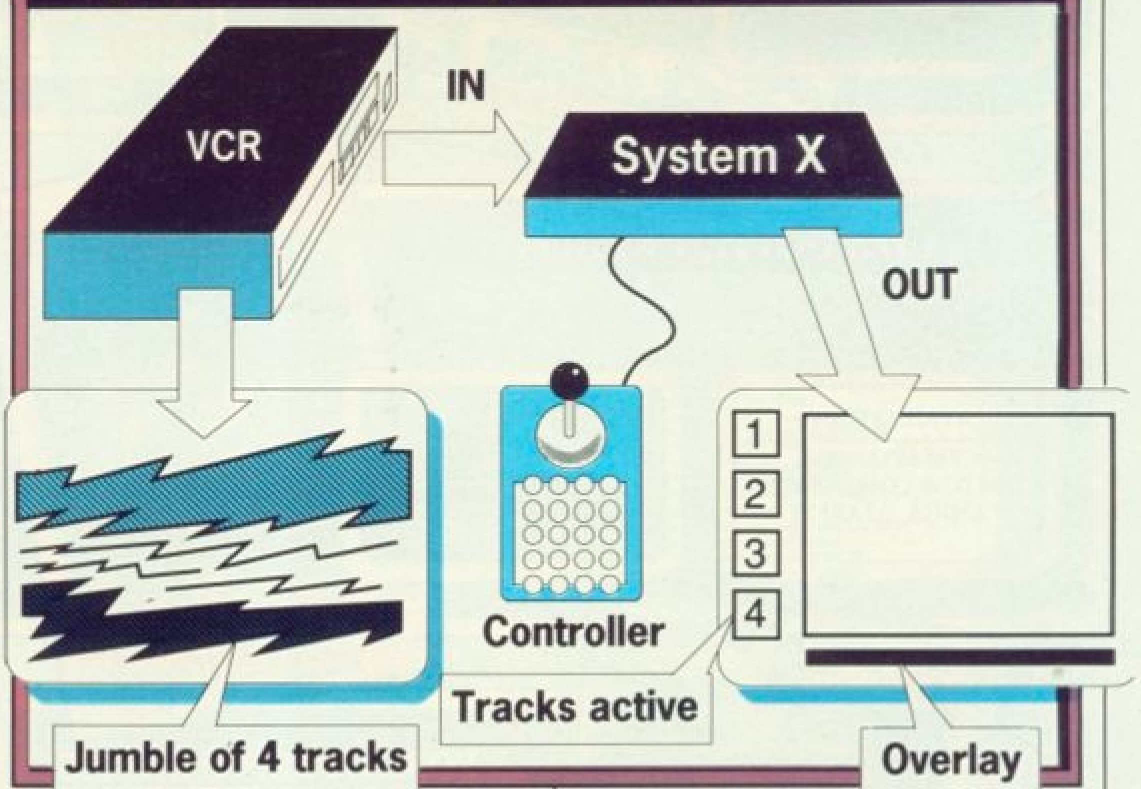


Figure 5 **System X**



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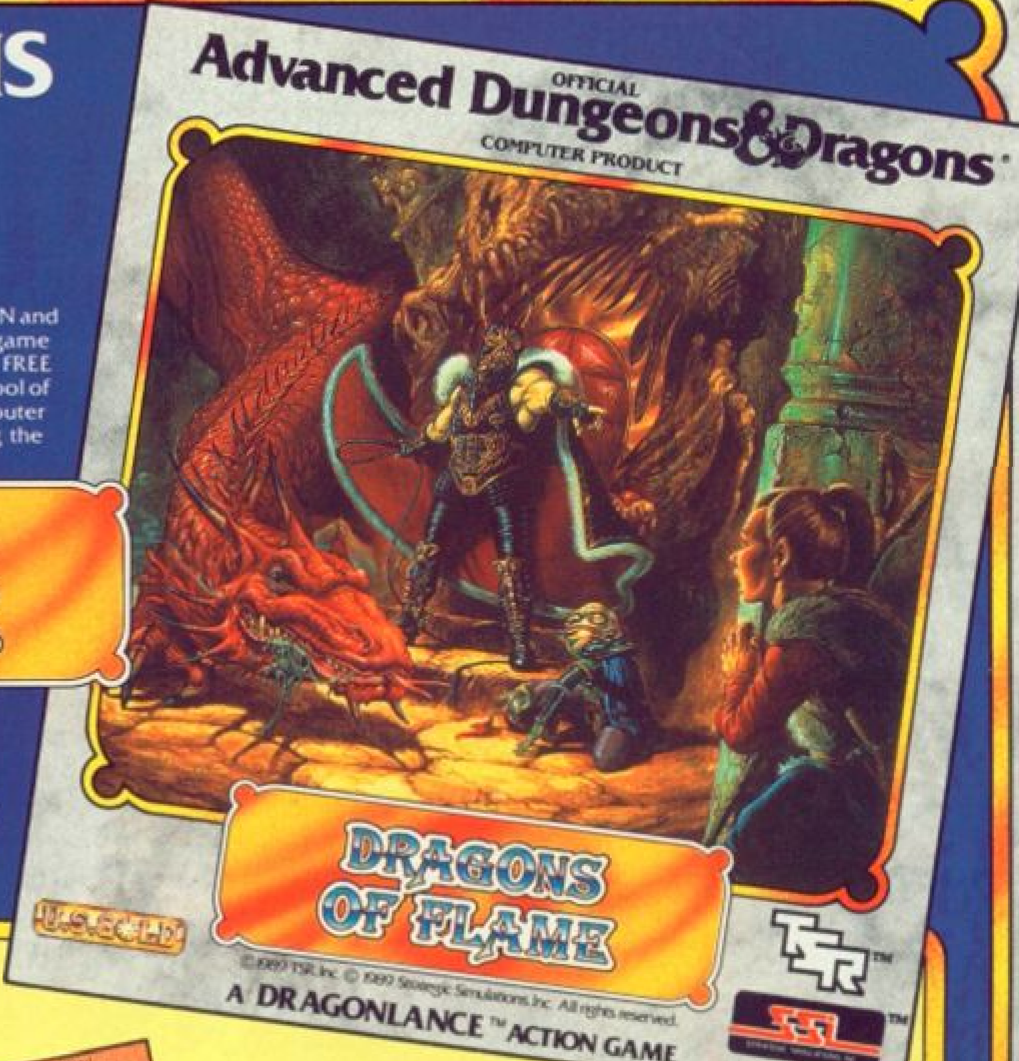
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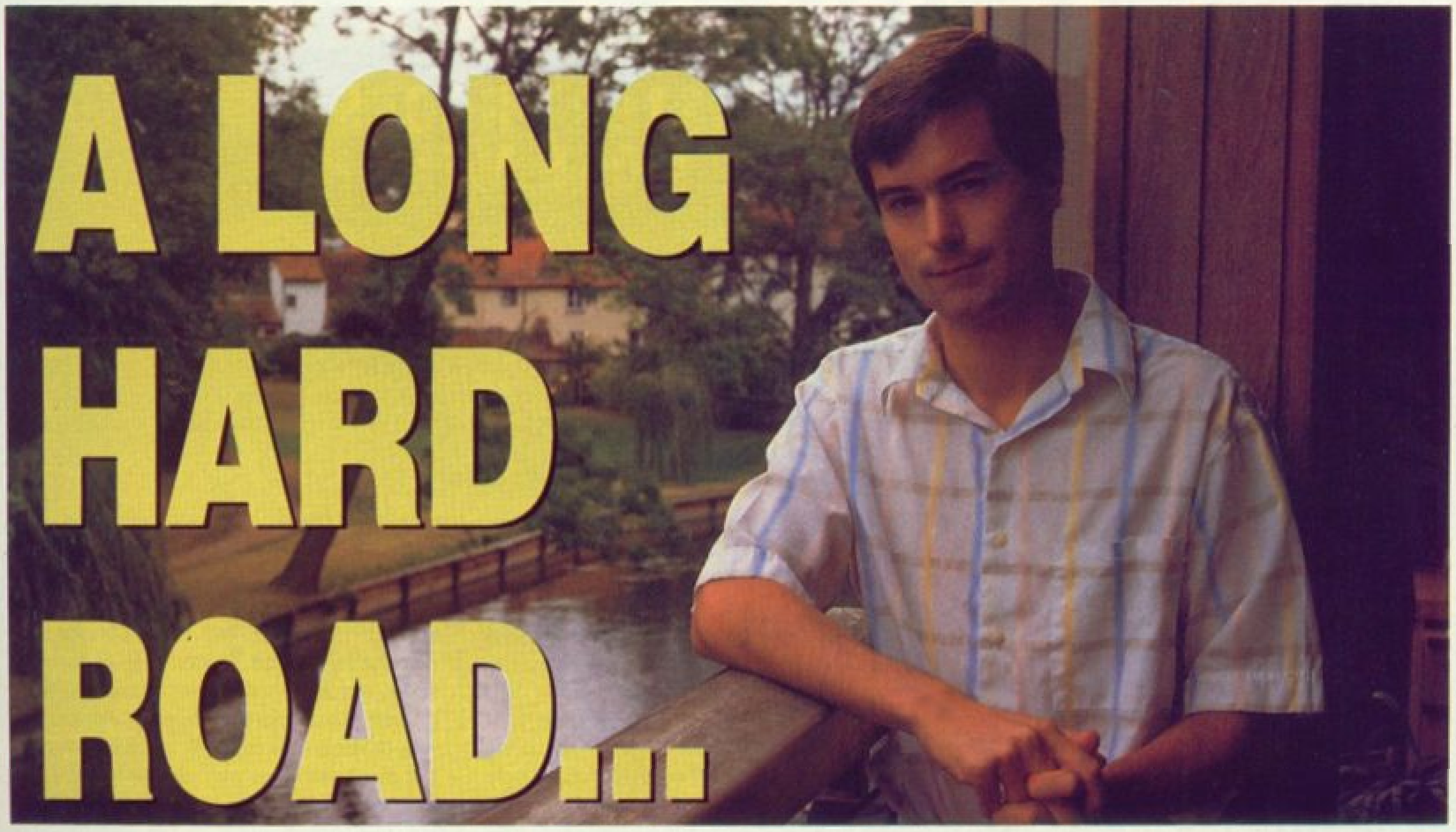


A LONG HARD ROAD...

When Eugene Lacey visited David Braben in his Cambridge retreat, he expected to hear all about *Elite Two*. But Britain's most respected programmer took him far beyond it, with some compelling – and unexpected – comments on the future of games technology...

When co-author of *Elite* David Braben gets low on inspiration he only has to stroll to the balcony of his swish Cambridge flat and gaze out across the Cam to Magdalene College. Just a few feet below his window students and tourists punt up and down easily within ear shot, though the communications is usually just one way: 'It's amazing', he remarks, '...the number of drunks who start singing 'Just One Cornetto".

The penthouse flat and Audi Quatro parked in the garage are the spoils of *Elite* and *Virus* – best sellers all over the world, but it's typical of the calm, unassuming personality of Braben that he should reinvest his proceeds from the enormously successful games in a place to work. Not a Ferrari or Paul Smith suit in sight, just a very nice place to live and work – which is precisely what David Braben has been doing for the last eighteen months – coding away on *Elite II*.

RING THE BELL

Although the entryphone card reads 'Braben and Bell' – Braben's former flat mate, and co-author of *Elite*, Ian Bell is no longer involved in the development of *Elite II*. 'We started on the design of *Elite II* in 1984 when we were still at University. Ian Bell wrote an interpretive language to write it, but we were forced to stop. After about a year we decided to give up. The design for *Elite II* was very ambitious. It was running – but too slowly. It just wasn't doing what we wanted it do. We were programming on the BBC and in the end decided it was foolish to design a game that could be done on an 8bit machine. Ian Bell then gave up on the project.'

The famous Braben/Bell partnership thus reached an amicable conclusion and *Elite II* was shelved until Spring '87 when David Braben decided to resurrect it after completing *Virus*. But don't get too excited – there's still at least another year's work to do on the game before it hits the shops in Christmas 1990.

'The game is designed to follow logically from *Elite*. It takes a lot of the ideas that we knew we couldn't do in *Elite* and incorporates them. There will be very much greater scope in terms of what the player can do – for instance all the planets will be modelled correctly and you will be able to fly down to the surface . There will be cities on the surfaces of planets and a lot going on for the player to do'

> **"I didn't set out to think how I could do a better *Elite* – a sort of *Elite* with bells and whistles. The Basic *Elite* design was very simple. The computer didn't have to keep track of very much – all that is kept track of is the number of kills, legal status, amount of cash held etc – there will be a lot more for it do in *Elite II*, internals politics and so forth".**

'The graphics will be very much different to what's gone before. Despite some people saying the graphics in Virus represent the planet sequence of *Elite II* that is absolutely untrue. It is not all of that style even. Everything will be in first person view as if seen from a space ship. Unlike *Elite* the player will not be restricted to a space vehicle. There is a car that can be driven as well – and a VERY large space ship.'

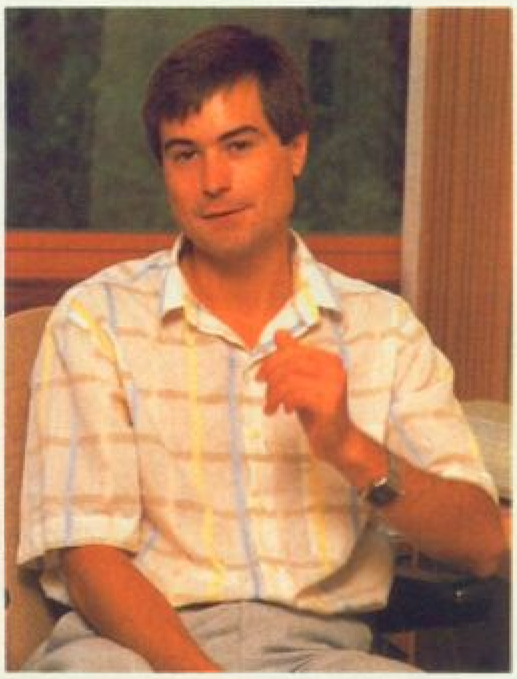
'There is also a war going on. The player can decide the extent to which he wants to get involved and interact with it. The trading will be there, but in a much more low key way – and it will be far more realistic.'

Braben is particularly pleased with the *Elite II* map. 'It will completely simulate a galaxy, unlike Elite, which was a pretty poor stab with its two dimensional map with its two thousand planets.' To hear someone describing Elite as a 'pretty poor stab' is a sobering experience for a games reviewer! But Braben doesn't seem to make sacred cows out of his previous successes.

ON FUTURE COMPUTERS AND THE ACE CHALLENGE

Braben is *not* convinced the ACE Challenge Computer is the way forward.

'It seems incredibly complicated. Your plan is to have more or less two of everything. If I were building a machine for the future – I would



put in just one very powerful custom chip because then the circuit board gets vastly shrunk and the cost of external links comes down – and if you imagine that a future machine will need very fast access to the RAM – and possibly a very wide bus – say 64bit, or at least 32bit, then you've got all these tracks on the circuit board which hikes the cost of the machine enormously.'

Braben's dream machine is likely to be based on some of the latest chip designs. 'The 88000 processor or Intel's I 860; they are two very interesting processors. They both do an awful lot within the chip – floating point in the instruction set – rather than having an external floating point processor'.

These chips are yet to be incorporated into new computers but they are certain to be used in the near future with IBM announcing an intention to use the I 860 – a development welcomed by Braben. 'Claims are made for the I 860 that up 120 MIPS can be used at peak execution speed. With that sort of power it seems totally unnecessary to have a separate chip to do things like 3D maths as you suggest in the ACE Challenge design'.

"Filled polygons are certainly not going to be flavour of the month for very much longer."

Braben believes that many future hardware designs are making the wrong assumptions about what the software will be like. Although the use of customised chips – such as the Tritter in the ACE Challenge design, for example – are useful for fulfilling certain contemporary design requirements, they are limited to that function. Braben would prefer a more flexible computer that can adopt to changes in software design. He illustrates his point by referring to 3D designs, adding that our ACE Challenge computer would be a 'pain in the neck to use...At the time the Amiga came out, the few 3D games that there were were line drawn – they put a line drawer in the Blitter and everyone did line drawn games. That was thought to be the future of 3D programming, but if you look at 3D games now very few of them are line drawn. Filled polygons are what you've got now, but even they are certainly not going to be flavour of the month for very much longer.

ON FASTER PROCESSORS AND MORE MEMORY...

'It will make a big difference...If you make the effort, having more memory will make things go faster because instead of evaluating functions you can have them in a big table. You then just get it out of the table precalculated.'

'Speed will make things easier – the games will be able to do a lot more in the time allotted – people like nice smooth displays and it will be possible to include a lot more detail in these smooth displays. Games are currently running quite slowly. You will be able in the future to have a lot more interaction with moving objects. I would like to think we can approach the interactive film stage in games'

There are a whole lot of ways 3D graphics can be modified. '

'Once you start talking about machines in three or four years time you've then got sufficient power to start doing things like real reflections. The current set of machines can only just manage to polygon draw. They can't do things like arbitrary texturing, shadowing or reflections. Polygons are useless for doing things like reflections because it's not polygons you're drawing – you are actually drawing images of what a reflective scene would look like'.

INTERACTIVE MOVIE HYPE

Despite claims by various companies that they already provide interactive movies, Braben is far from convinced. 'We are nowhere near it... I mean something where it would be like buying a video and interacting with the world portrayed by the images you see, that kind of things is years and years and years away – you can't even do it on Crays now!'.

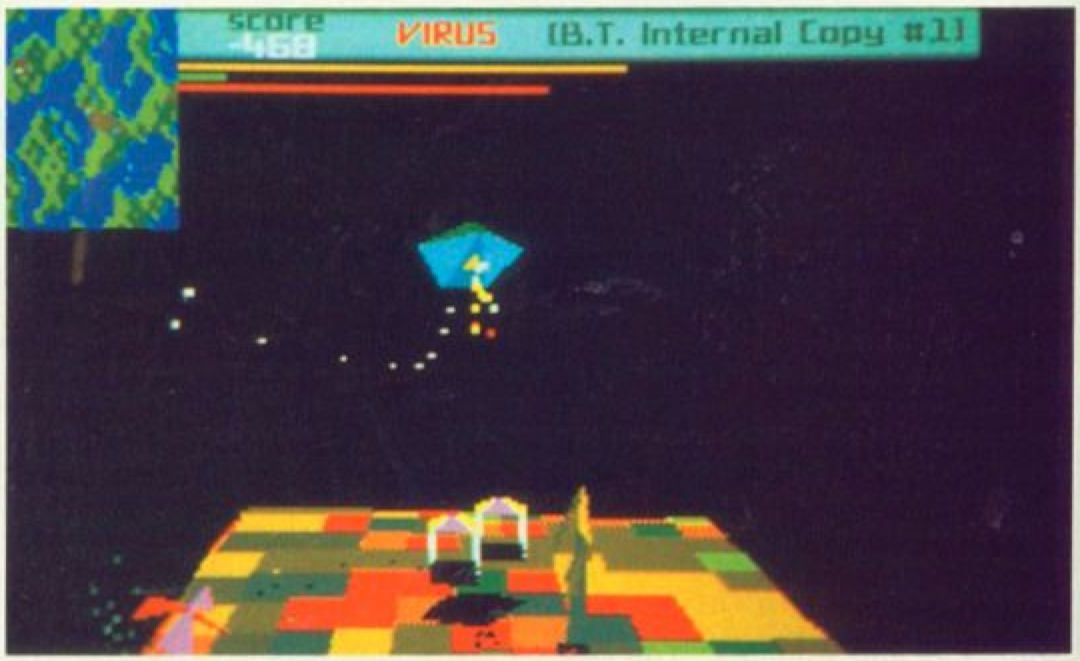
Braben sees a long hard road to the interactive movie world but is confident we will get there. He believes the necessary steps are 'a lot of effort in software and the new brand of hardware along the lines of the I 860 type. From its sheer speed and generality of its instruction set, that is approaching the sort of speed we'd need'. If Braben could have taken an I-860 back in a time ship to around about 1984 *Elite* would have been a very different game.

More sophisticated game designs are needed to exploit the power of the new machines to the full. Braben believes there are signs already of games designers using greater power more intelligently. The problem with development currently is the limitations of the machines. 'You may decide I want to do this, wow this is going to be amazing, but then you realise it is going to run something like once every ten minutes, if it runs at all. On the other hand, we have still got a lot more to get out of the Amiga and the ST.'

ON 32 BIT COMPUTERS AND SWIRLING CLOUDS

On 32 bit computers Braben is a firm fan of the Archimedes and believes the Fujitsu FM Towns is 'very interesting' but believes for the gamer in the street that '...it is not as big a leap as from 8 to 16 bit because the main thing people have noticed from 8 to 16 bit has been the increase of colours and the resolution of the screens. The improvement from 16 bit to 32 bit will be tenuous. It will be more of a subtle thing. The graphics are doing more, they are more sophisticated.

'Games like *R-Type* don't need the power of a 32 bit processor. The Amiga already has



'In *Virus* the game was designed to run on a machine that is not truly capable of doing a proper 3D full world view – it is capable of doing it, but I liked the idea of putting shadows on the trees and there is a fair bit of detail in it'. With an I 860 computer '...in *Virus* it would have been possible to have a horizon going off into infinity. One of the main problems of the game is that you can't see very far. A first person view would also have been possible. The game design from the point of view of what the player is doing is very simple'.

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no trouble recreating something like *R-Type*. If you've got a more powerful CPU, it just means the processor is going to spend more time doing nothing. However, the sort of games where it will make a phenomenal difference are games of the *Elite*/3D environment type where it does require a lot of processing power to get anything that looks impressive. As far as *Elite* type games are concerned the power will vastly effect the graphics and also the feel of the game. It will be possible, for example, to have big swirling clouds.'

"It will become more and more the case that the design of the game is more important than the speed of the machine. "

'With something like the FM Towns machine relatively few games will fully exploit the screen. Anything that involves a two dimensional display – the *R-Types* and *Defenders* of this world – will only see a tenuous improvement with increased computing power: once it comes to the point where the computer can repaint the entire display 50 times a second, with no problem, further increases are redundant.'

'However, there are game designs coming through that will exploit more sophisticated graphics and I believe people will eventually be weaned off the umpteenth variation on *R-Type*. The only type of game that needs greater power is the 3D game or the scenario with very, very intricate game play – certain simulators, for example.'

ON CD SOFTWARE

Braben believes the vast amounts of memory made accessible by CD

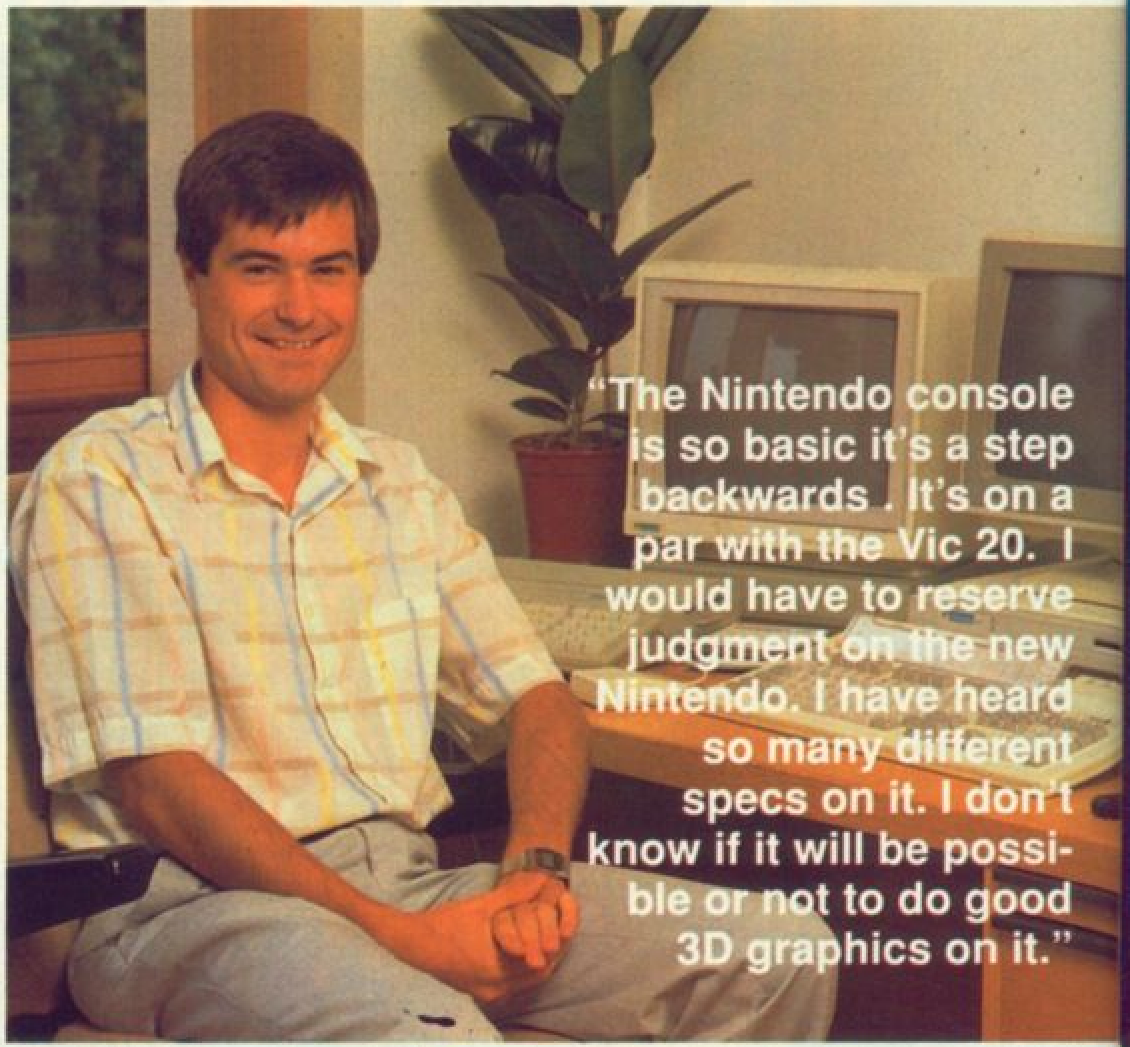
'...is more likely to be used than the extra power of processors. It would be very useful to have access to vast databases. You could provide real maps of areas in which you could adventure. You could have adventures taking place in real towns. That sort of thing is just not possible at the moment. People make a sort of stab at it with scenery disks for flight sims where you could about make out that you are flying over San Francisco with a very basic outline of the Golden Gate bridge. I'm talking about something where you can actually walk down the streets and explore – and then you can set a game scenario within that reality...That amount of data would be very useful'.

ON CONSOLES AND VIC 20'S

'The PC Engine has the same problem as the machine suggested in the ACE Challenge. They have pre-assumed the type of graphics. That is probably fair enough in something like the PC Engine. It is drawing very large bit dumps, sprites, and a large number of colours, and is doing it reasonably quickly'.

'But it is a fairly slow machine and also the sort of machine that it is very hard to do a different type of game on. The CD on it is just a gimmick. It's really little more than a fast loading device. I don't consider that to be a form of CD.'

Many thanks to David Braben for granting us this exclusive interview. We look forward to getting our hands on Elite II...and Elite III...and....



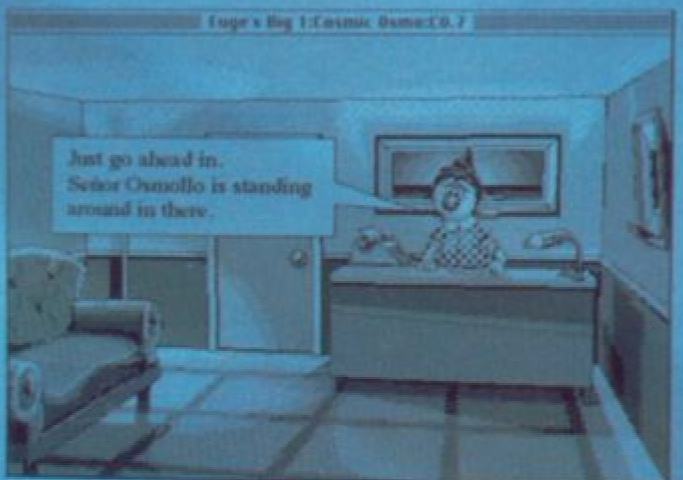
"The Nintendo console is so basic it's a step backwards . It's on a par with the Vic 20. I would have to reserve judgment on the new Nintendo. I have heard so many different specs on it. I don't know if it will be possible or not to do good 3D graphics on it."

ON COSMIC OSMO AND HYPER-DRIVE GAMES

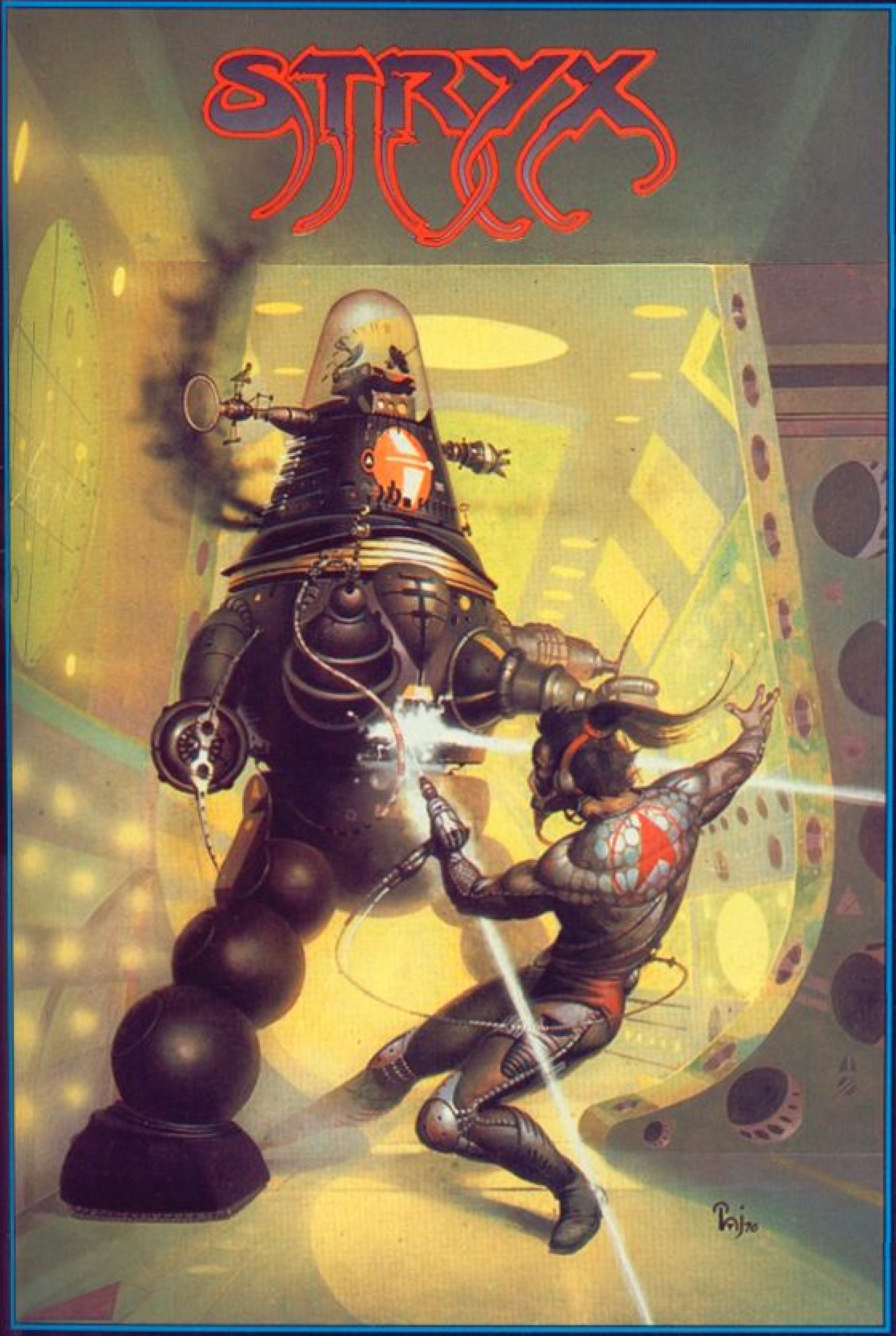
Never mind the quantity, what about the quality is Braben's view of Cyan Software's much talked about Macintosh game.

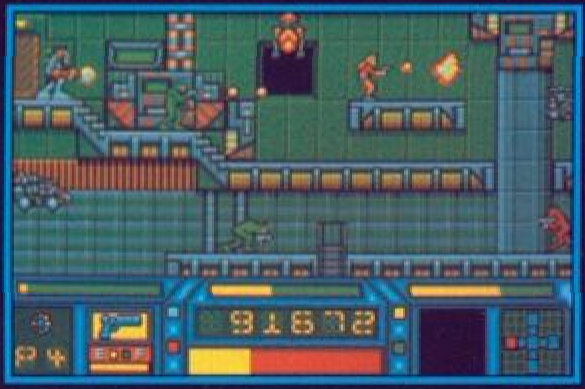
'Things like *Cosmic Osmo* are an amusing irrelevance. They've just put an enormous number of pictures on a disk all linked Hypercard-style. It's very easy to make a lot of data – even compressed pictures occupy quite a lot of memory. It's an interesting idea to say that exploration is the sole point of the game. Exploration is fun – but it does need an awful lot to support it. That can't be the only thing to the game. There has to be other things going on if it's just a slide show – however beautifully drawn there is ultimately no point. It's a pre-designed tree, a sort of *Dragon's Lair*.'

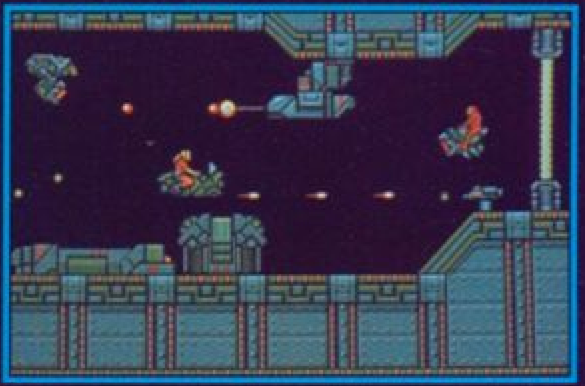
'What's more, it isn't a world that you can arbitrarily explore. You can't blow a hole in the wall and go through it. It's all pre-arranged. Once you've done it, you've done it. There may be one cupboard you haven't opened but that's it.'

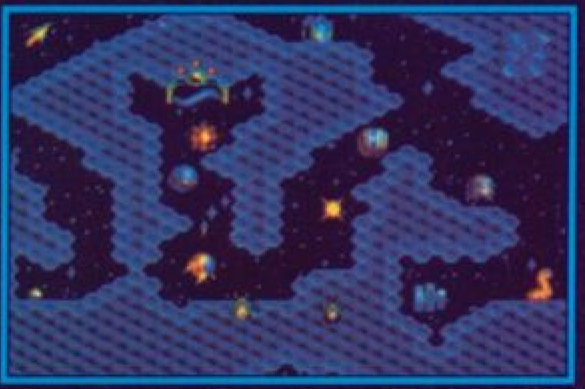


***Cosmic Osmo* – just a cosmic irrelevance?**









PSYCLAPSE

- ***Ultra smooth 8 way scrolling***
- ***Designed with small fully animated characters from Garvan Corbett, the artist who brought you the classic hit Barbarian***
- ***Multi-directional free format weapon usage***
- ***Large playfield for even more action.***

You're really up against it this time. Those revolting robots have finally upped and turned their horribly powerful weapons on their kind human masters. Someone's got to stop it before it all gets out of hand. I mean, you just can't have bloodthirsty Cyborg assassins roaming the streets of Dome City and expect the citizens to put up with it. Who on earth is going to sort out the mess? You guessed – you get the job.

Fortunately, you are just a little bit on the special side. You are Stryx, the product of Project Alpha Secure, the meanest fighting, smartest thinking machine ever invented. Half-man, half-robot, you are the business, the only one who can stop those wicked Cyborgs.

You'll have to work hard, though, blasting hordes of the revolting creatures (such a sad waste of scrap metal) and rescuing the keys to the Lifeforce.

So, Stryx, you'd better get your jet pack on for some high level robot stomping through the immensely complex underground world of the Dome cities. It's a tough assignment, and time is running out.

AMIGA/ATARI ST £19.95

Screen Shots from the Atari ST Version

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TOWER OF BABEL
RAINBIRD

Tower of Babel is an intricate 3D strategy game involving an interconnecting network of towers, platforms and lifts all rendered in solid 3D with innovative light and shading techniques. Take contr of robot spiders and program them to solve problem and puzzles and interact with other creatures, such as Pushers, Zappers and Grabbers. Alternatively, re time control is available to you at any time for instantaneous reaction to the game's developments For the more adventurous among you, there is a complete game designer, allowing the construction your own series of towers, platforms and lifts. Attempt to fox your friends with your own fiendishly difficult creations. More than just a game, more than just a puzzle – Tower of Babel is a whole new concep in strategy gaming.

AVAILABLE FOR; ST&AMIGA

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GL8 8LD. Tel: 0666 504326/504412

SCREEN TEST

PIC CURVE POWER

The PIC – Predicted Interest Curve – is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around. Here's why...

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's adrenalin level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. But this tells you an awful lot than just what your interest level will be at any given time (although that's obviously important in itself)...

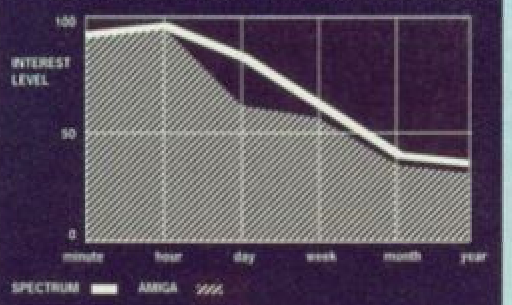
For example, a high one minute rating means that the game must look fantastic and get you all excited from the word go. That means it's probably a good game to show off to the neighbours – after all, they probably aren't going to pay attention for much more than a minute, after which they'll go back to drinking coffee and making rude remarks about 'those awful hostile games the boys play these days'.

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot about a game too. If there's a dip here, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into – not recommended if you like to get down to something quick and easy. Alternatively, the graphics may put you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC comment for more details.

Finally, you've got the month and year ratings. The better a game holds up here the more deserving it is of your hard earned cash.

PIC curve construction takes a lot of playing on the part of ACE reviewers. PIC curve analysis is an art in itself. The reward is knowing just what you're getting when you make the decision to splash out on *Mutant Macdonald Gettysburgers*....or *F15 Strike Eagle II* – just one of this month's excellent examples of today's software technology.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



PICs give you more than a rating – they represent the entire life of a game...yes SIR!

The mountains glow with certain promise on the horizon of *Continental Circus* from Virgin/Mastertronic – see the 16-bit racer feature starting on page 79.

DON'T FORGET THE UPDATES!

We don't just review the latest releases. We also check out conversions of old games onto new formats. So there could well be a recent conversion for YOUR machine...ST, PC, and Amiga owners get lucky this month on pages 97 and 98.

THE ACE REVIEWING SYSTEM

PIC CURVES

This unique feature to the ACE reviewing system charts the interest level that a game stimulates over a period of time. The curve is accompanied by a comment to explain why it's the shape it is. Find out more in the Pic Curve Power panel on this page...

Each review also carries special 'Version Boxes' that give you details of the game's implementation on a specific machine. These boxes include ratings for...

GRAPHICS

All aspects of the game's graphics with the limitations of each machine taken into account. A good-looking Spectrum game will therefore score higher than an average-looking Amiga one.

AUDIO

The music and sound effects are rated here. A high rating is possible on even limited machines like the Spectrum and PC if the computer's shortcomings are cleverly sidestepped.

IQ FACTOR

Yes, sometimes you have to use your brain. This rating evaluates the risk of mental effort – which some people actually enjoy...Note that ACE readers are generally reckoned to be more intelligent than other human beings, so the ratings may be lower than you expect...

FUN FACTOR

Basically a measure of mindless addictiveness. Games like *Arkanoid* and *Flying Shark* require virtually zero brain power but are still remarkably addictive. Most coin-ops score well here because they are designed for instant satisfaction. Games don't have to be *either* fun *or* intelligent – they can be both.

ACE RATING

This is not just plucked out of the air but is calculated from the area under the PIC Curve. To get a really high rating a game will not only have to be very addictive but stand the test of time as well. Just because a game does not get over 900 does not mean we are not recommending it – the following is a general guide to what the ratings mean.

900+ A classic game, recommended without reservation.

800-899 A superb game, but perhaps lacking the long-term depth to last into the month and year categories.

700-799 Still highly recommended, but probably has a couple of aspects to the gameplay that take the edge off it.

600-699 The 'fair' zone, where it tends to be very good 'if you like that sort of thing'.

500-599 This still has good things going for it, but the game clearly has some noticeable problems.

400-499 Problems with gameplay and programming make this an inferior game.

300-399 Not only is the gameplay bad but the design was probably flawed in the first place.

200-299 Things are getting really serious now...

100-199 ZX81 games running on an Amiga.

Under 100 Nothing has ever achieved this appalling level of rating. If anything ever does, it wouldn't even be worth having it for free.

VERSION BOXES

This covers version-specific information on graphics, audio, loading problems etc. If there's no box for your machine but a version is planned, it'll be covered as an update in a later issue.

THE TEAM

..includes *Steve Cooke*, one of the original editors of this award-winning magazine, known to thousands through his many other previous identities, including *Zzap!*'s White Wizard, The Pilgrim, and Old Baldy.

Eugene Lacey is the man who put Britain's top-selling games magazine, C&VG, on the map. Luckily for us, Eugene got fed up with writing for 8-year olds and decided the time had come to tackle thechallenge of ACE magazine. As one of Britain's most experienced games journalists, his word is LAW.

Ciaran Brennan should need no introduction. Formerly editor of Zzap! magazine, he's now deputy editor of The One and an honorary ACE reviewer.

Julian Rignall, formerly UK Coin Op champion, former editor of Zzap!64, and the man with his name on more hi-score tables on Brighton Pier than anyone else.

Mike Pattenden is the editor of Commodore User – so he ought to know what he's talking about when it comes to C64 stuff. But he knows a thing or two about the Amiga, and is no dummy when it comes to other machines either.

Mark Patterson has put in two and a half years of games slavery for Commodore User and C&VG and knows everything there is to know about RPGs.

We don't review anything until we are 100% certain that we've got it right. We've checked them out thoroughly – now you can too.

BAT

OCEAN relicensed to clean up – again.

THIS must be the first time I can honestly say 'Great game shame about the film'.

No, I didn't like the movie. Not that it matters much as everyone has seen it by now anyway and (regardless of what I thought of it) there is no doubt that it provides excellent material for converting into computer entertainment.

This is the last of the mid-89 film blockbusters to be converted to the home computer screen. We've had James Bond, Indiana Jones, and now the Caped Crusader from Gotham City enters the fray in what is by far the best of 'em all in terms of computer entertainment.

Right from the opening screens you can see and hear the quality of the conversion and get to grips with the Batgear you have always longed to have a go on. There is the famous Bat-rope with its Bat-anchor that latches onto window ledges and enables our hero to swing into action. As well as the Bat-shurikens that the super hero can lob at the villains to 'Kapow' them out of the action.

The game commences in the warehouse of Axis Chemicals where all sorts of toxic substances are leaking from pipes and dangerous gasses being exuded into the air. The Joker's men are everywhere and Batman needs to be nimble to avoid them. His Batsuit has been made impregnable to bullets – up to a certain number. He is, however, helpless against the bombs being lobbed at him by the green suited villain. These will knock him off his rope or kill him should they make contact enough times.

This opening platform level makes for an absorbing game in its own right. Swinging around on the ropes is excellent fun – and nothing has ever been done like it before in a platform game – unless you count Cuthbert In The Jungle, in which case you're probably too busy collecting a pension to play this game. Of course there have been other ropes before but nothing as sophisticated as this. You have to be a sure shot when you throw your rope in order to swing into the right position, kicking a few villains into the middle of next week as you fly through the air.

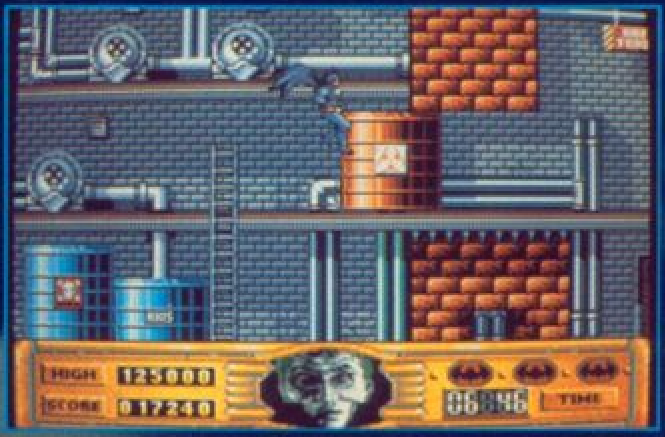
Another neat graphical touch is the way the Bat-cap flies up when you jump to a platform below. The game has quality written all over it.

There are five levels in total. As well as the Axis Factory you will see action in the Bat Cave, Batmobile, Batwing, and face a final showdown with the Joker in Gotham Cathedral.

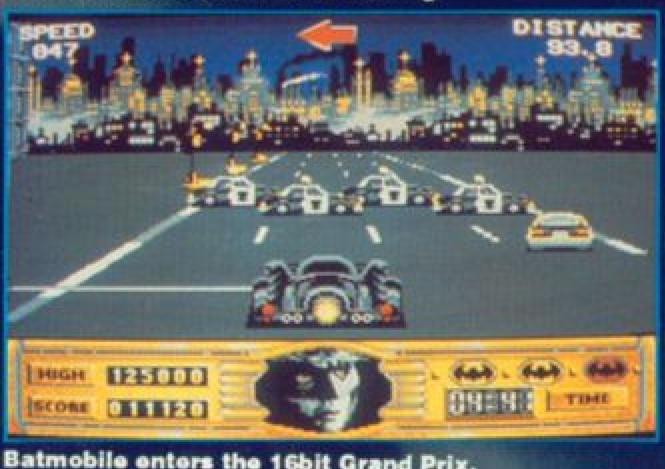
All of the sections of the game are entertaining and rewarding but the real thrill of the game is when you sit behind the wheel of the Batmobile. Ocean have correctly given this most attention of all – and what an excellent job they have made of it.

It plays like a sort of Bat-style Chase HQ coin-op which – considering Ocean have the rights to that coin-op – bodes well for more thrills to come from the Mancunian games house. The aim of the game here is to sort out the Joker's van which is speeding through the streets of Gotham City.

Taking the controls of the Batwing laucnhes another 3D game which has beeen superbly executed. Reminiscent of Afterburner as you swoop low over the carnival taking out the balloons (filled with nerve gas) that the Joker is using to hold Gotham City to ransom.



The mask tells you who is winning



Batmobile enters the 16bit Grand Prix.

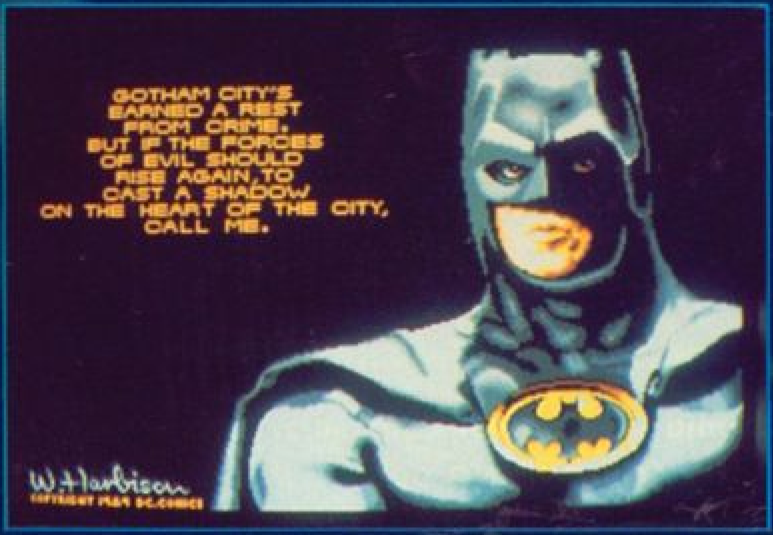
MAN

The final confrontation with the Joker takes place in Gotham Cathedral. This is another platform affair which is very similar to the Axis Factory. The map is different though – and equally vast – so be prepared to jot down a few simple sketch maps to help you find your way around as you track down the opposition.

Ocean have captured all of the atmosphere of the film but have sensibly concentrated on a few of the action sequences. This makes for five entertaining and challenging arcade games at the end of which (if you're successful) you'll triumph over the Joker without having to go through a complex arcade-adventure style challenge as you do,for example, in the recent Indy Action game. Maybe other licensee's will learn a lesson here.

Ocean are to be congratulated for putting so much effort into an excellent arcade game – especially when, given the Bat-hype, even Bat-shaped Space Invaders would have won them the number one slot on all formats. Proves that cynical commercialism does not always triumph over high personal and professional standards.

● Eugene Lacey



GOTHAM CITY'S
EARNED A REST
FROM CRIME.
BUT IF THE FORCES
OF EVIL SHOULD
RISE AGAIN, TO
CAST A SHADOW
ON THE HEART OF THE CITY,
CALL ME.

Amiga Batman - Commodore's joker in the pack to sell Amiga's this Xmas.

SPECTRUM VERSION

Only two colours on certain levels but retaining the same game play as the other versions. The Batmobile level is slightly different on the Spectrum in that it is a horizontally scrolling race – as opposed to the 3D version described above. Every bit as much fun to play as the 16-bit versions.

GRAPHICS	7	**IQ FACTOR**	8
AUDIO	7	**FUN FACTOR**	8

ACE RATING 911

AMIGA VERSION

Full of sound and graphical frills. There is a delightful screen when Jack Nicholson's Joker appears laughing, and later asks if you 'have ever danced in the pale moonlight'. Far superior sound and speed to all other versions as the Amiga flexes its muscles and shows its superiority in the Caped Crusader game.

GRAPHICS	8	**IQ FACTOR**	8
AUDIO	8	**FUN FACTOR**	9

ACE RATING 922

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.99dk	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£24.99dk	OUT NOW
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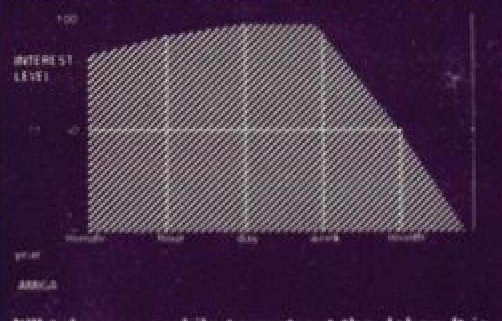
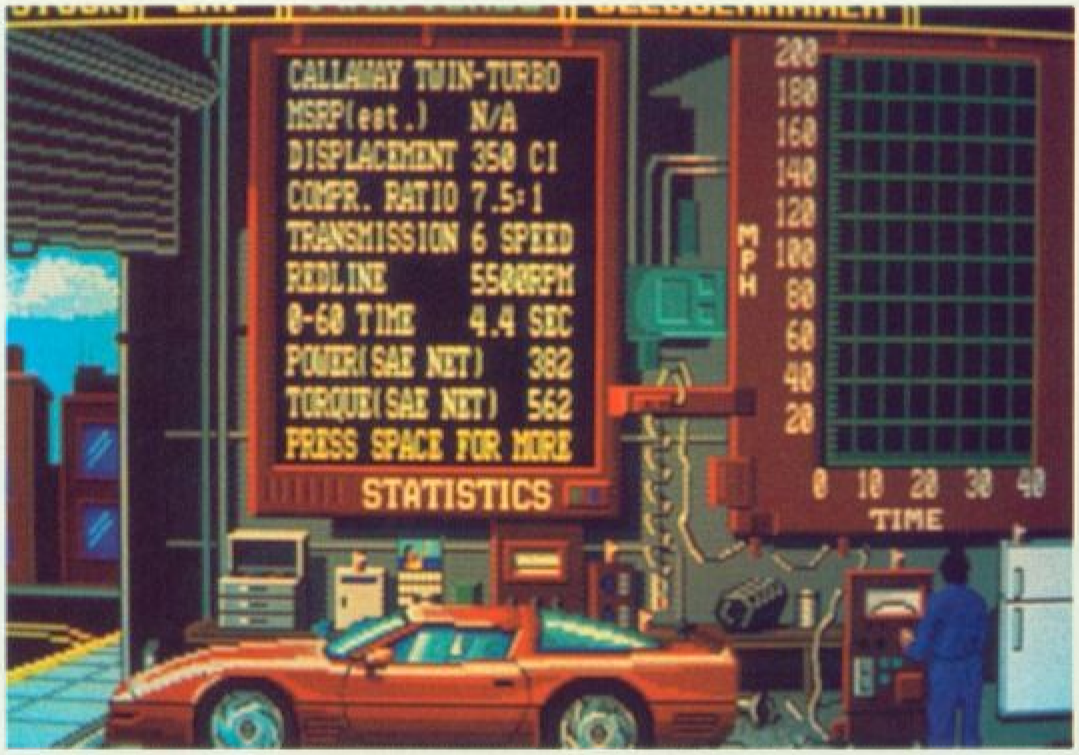
C64/128	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	IMMINENT

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



It'll take you a while to sort out the Joker. It is good fun doing so, but ultimately Bat hype will pass as will the appeal of this game.

The Sledgehammer – choose this option for raw power, but don't expect it to turn on a sixpence.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CALLAWAY TWIN-TURBO
MSRP(est.)    N/A
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TRANSMISSION 6 SPEED
REDLINE      5500RPM
0-60 TIME    4.4 SEC
POWER(SAE NET)   382
TORQUE(SAE NET)  562
PRESS SPACE FOR MORE
STATISTICS
```

MIRROSOFT set down their wheels where 'God Save The Queen; has a different meaning...

VETTE

AND now the latest in a long line of 16-bit racing games, but is it good enough to knock *Stunt Car Racer* off the top spot? Read on and discover for yourself...

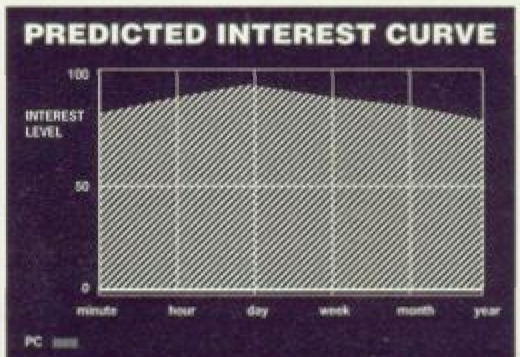
The Vette (short for Corvette, not the James Herriott type) has always been an immensely popular car, both for its looks and its power. For some strange reason, however, it has never had the benefits of factory sponsorship like Ferrari and Porsche have. Even so, that hasn't stopped Corvette owners taking them out on impromptu races through the city streets now and again. You are one of those owners.

Just a glance at the program and packaging will tell you that *Vette* is going to be something special. Programmed by the creators of the aerial masterpiece *Falcon*, *Vette* has all the complexity of design combined with clever simplicity in presentation that made *Falcon* a winner – and should make *Vette* a winner too.

First of all, you have to choose which of the four Corvettes to race, from a 1989 Stock, the safest and slowest, through to a custom Sledgehammer, with awful handling but capable of some immense speeds. Then you can choose which of the opponents to challenge, from a nice easy Porsche through to a Ferrari F40. Finally, you choose the race itself...

At this point, things really start to get interesting. The four races are basically from A to B in San Francisco. The amazing thing is, and this hasn't been done in a racing sim before, is that you are aren't told any route to take. Instead, it's up to you to find your own way there as you race thorugh an accurately mapped version of the gay bapital of the world.

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Fun at the start, fun halfway through, and still fun at the end...It's one of 'those' games!

PC VERSION

Vette supports all colour graphics modes and looks good in all of them too. The update is amazingly fast and smooth and the use of colour is spot on. The sound is limited (surprise, surprise), but the gameplay certainly isn't. Drive down to your software dealer today!

GRAPHICS	**9**	**IQ FACTOR**	**6**
AUDIO	**4**	**FUN FACTOR**	**9**

ACE RATING 926

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£00.00dk	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£00.00dk	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£00.00dk	OUT NOW

Essentially, what you get as a result is a bundleof different games in one. You can play Beat the Police in The Narrow Back Streets, for example, or Race Across the Centre of The Park And Try to Kill as Many Pedestrians As Possible. The possibilities are almost endless...

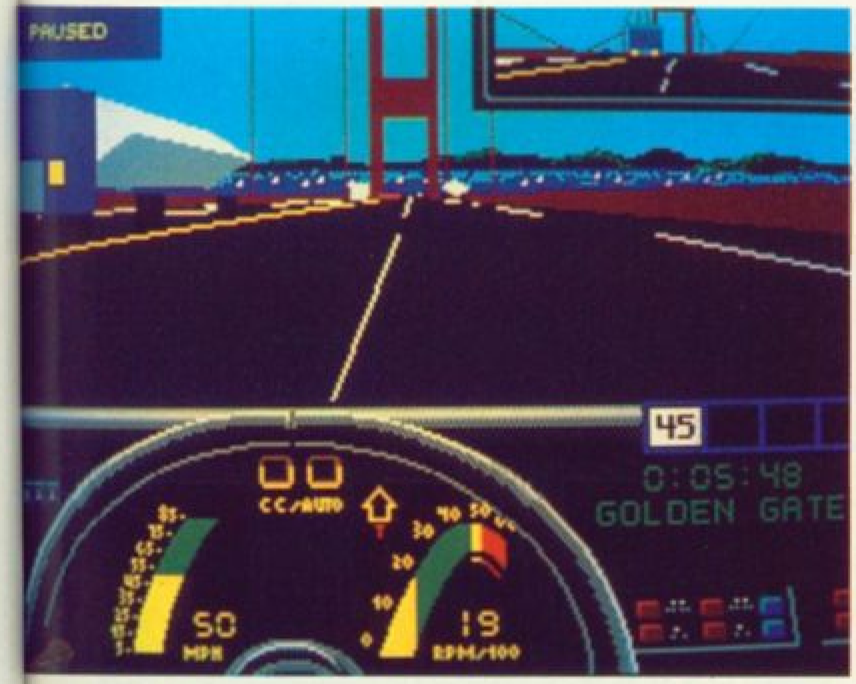
The city itself, and therefore the whole game, is laid out with filled vectors, and very impressive they are too. Skyscrapers are real skyscrapers, you can almost hear the hoards of screaming kids on the school buses and you can pricatically feel the bump as you run over little ladies overladen with shopping.

As with *Falcon*, you have many different views to choose from. You can look out left, right and forward windows, with or without interior of the car to tgive you a wider view, or if it's more of an arcade game you want, you can choose the helicopter view, which gives you an *OutRun* sort of viewpoint (and, incidentally, easier to play).

Controls are as easy as falling through a concealed trap in the middle of a dark forest. Keys 1-5 change to gears 1 to 5, A sticks the car on Automatic transmission, C switches on and off the Cruise Control, and the usual joystick movements cover accelerate, brake, steer left, and steer right.

So how does it rate as a game? Brilliantly. We've waited for this one for quite a while and we're happy to say it's been worth every pulse-beat. It's fast, realistic, exciting, fun and there;'s enough variety to keep you playing forever, or maybe just a little less than that. It doesn't quite have the edge over *Stunt Car*, but it sure isn't far behind.

● Tony Dillon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GOLDEN GATE
CC/AUTO
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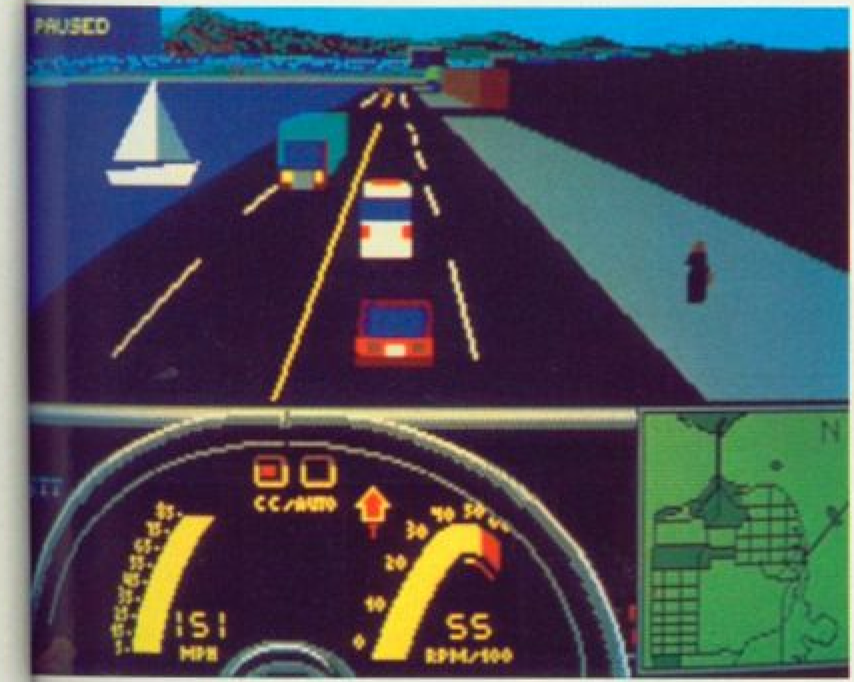
MPH
19
RPM/100

Bridge ahead! but where do we head to next?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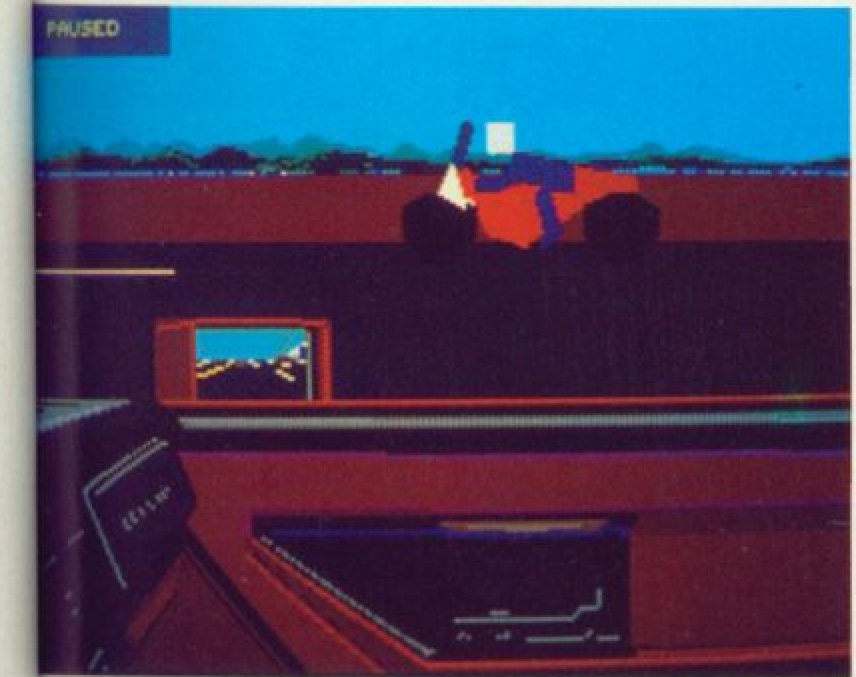
...Answer: check out the neighbourhood on the map.



Is that someone from RVF on that bike? Just one of the Vette viewpoints available...

SOCCER MATCH

KENNY DAGLISH

OUT IN OCTOBER ON
ATARI ST
CBM AMIGA

FREE
Win a trip
to Anfield

IMPRESSIONS

TINTIN ON THE MOON

INFOGRAMES grow a little tuft of hair.

IN my youth, Tintin has to have been one of the most influential figures I ever came across, next to Asterix. And who could forget the massive two book epic, *Destination Moon* and *Conquest Of The Moon*. Cor, what a spiffing life Tintin led. Him and his pals Captain Haddock and Professor Calculus and his loveable dog, Snowy.

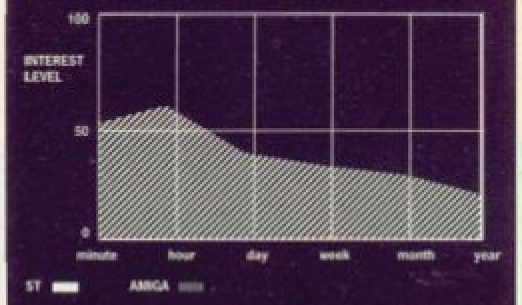
Now you too can live the space bound adventure that marks as a deep milestone in my reading life as *Lord Of The Rings*. Race through the stars in one of man's greatest ever achievements, the rocket ship, and land where no man has ever trod before. That mysterious hunk of rock that hangs so ominously in the night sky, the moon.

But bad things are afoot. The dastardly Colonel Boris has smuggled aboard the ship with the intent of sabotaging the mission. As you fly through space he will plant bombs to blow up vital parts of the ship and will set fire to others while at the same time trying to kill you with his high intensity laser gun and tying up all your pals.

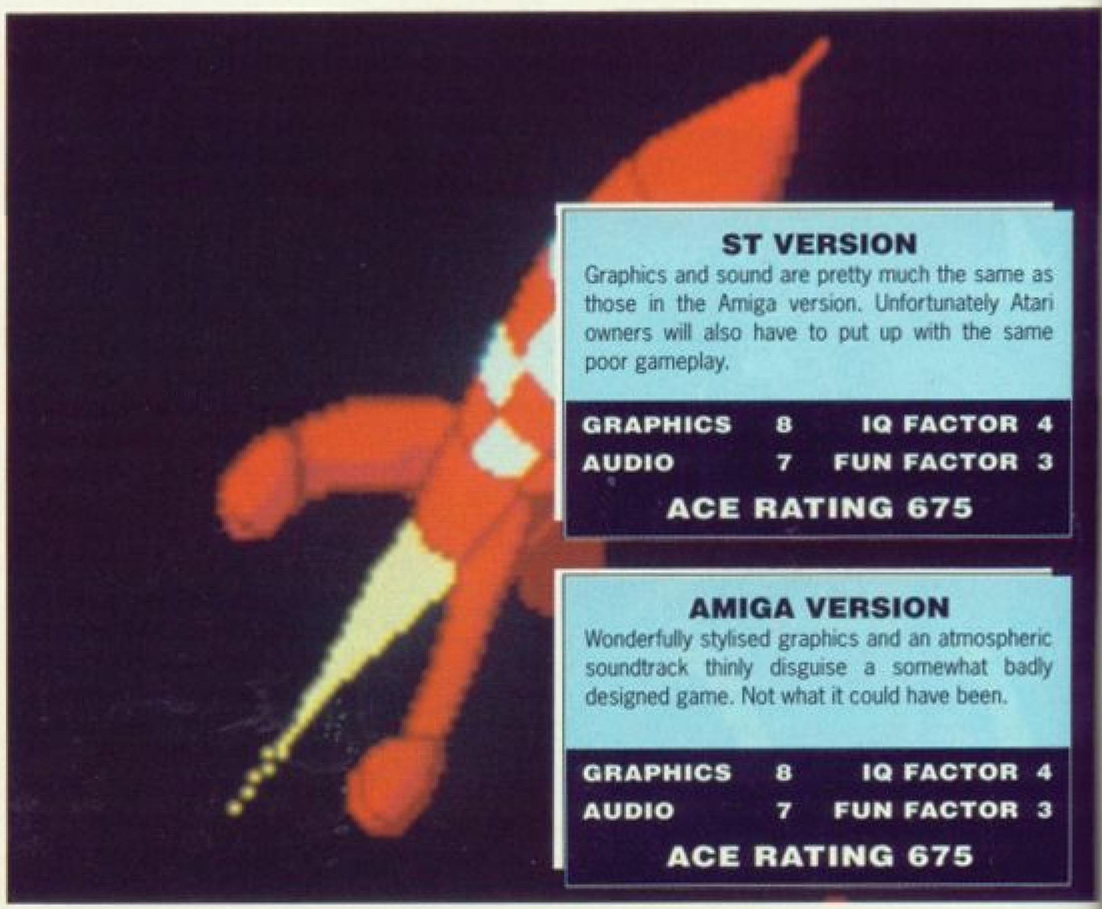
But before all this happens, you have to fly through space a little. As you race through the first person perspective starfield, objects race out of the screen at you. Things you should avoid are large lumps of rock called asteroids (or in their native french l'asteroids). The other things that race toward you should definitely be collected. Large yellow pockets of energy race at you, and these have to be collected to top up your energy level. There are also red pods that race at you. Collect 8 of these to finish a flying section, of which there are four. Finish a section and you go into Tintin mode.

The game changes to a side on flip screen arcade adventure. On the left hand side of the

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Initial graphical interest that soon dissipates thanks to the lack of gameplay.



ST VERSION

Graphics and sound are pretty much the same as those in the Amiga version. Unfortunately Atari owners will also have to put up with the same poor gameplay.

GRAPHICS	**8**	**IQ FACTOR**	**4**
AUDIO	**7**	**FUN FACTOR**	**3**

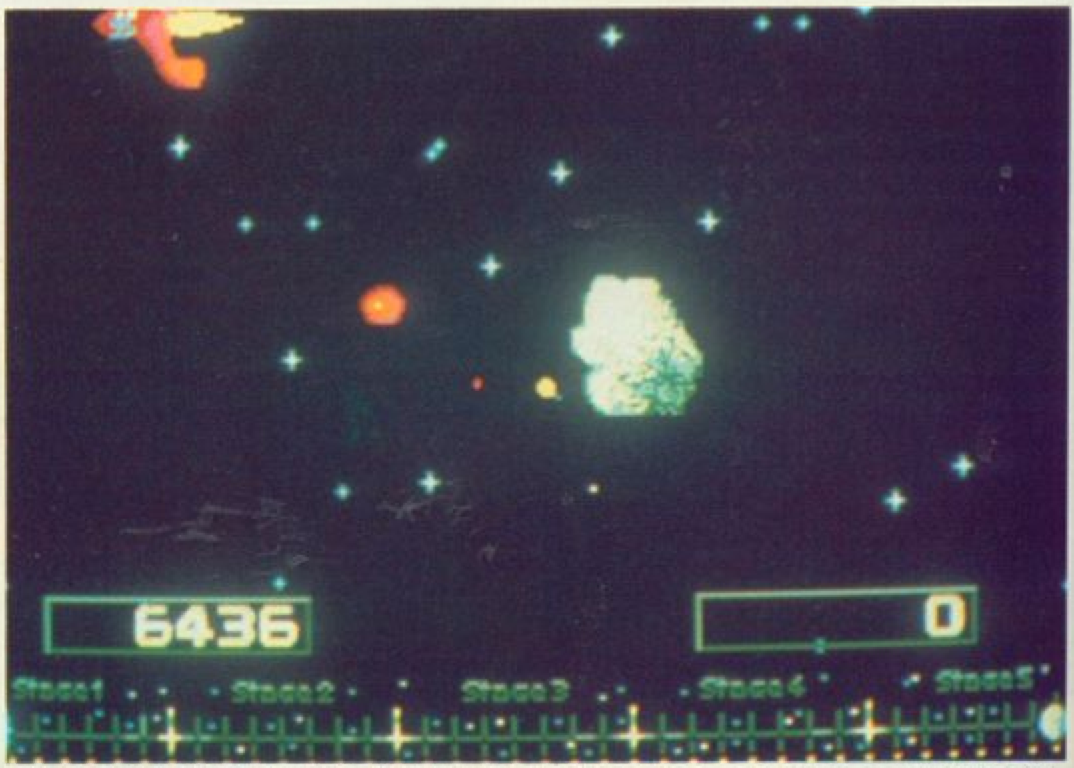
ACE RATING 675

AMIGA VERSION

Wonderfully stylised graphics and an atmospheric soundtrack thinly disguise a somewhat badly designed game. Not what it could have been.

GRAPHICS	**8**	**IQ FACTOR**	**4**
AUDIO	**7**	**FUN FACTOR**	**3**

ACE RATING 675



Asteroids in 3D? Tintins ship attempts to avoid the passing boulders, and usually fails!

Tintin and pals unbeknown to NASA, actually make it into space in the 50s!

RELEASE BOX		
ATARI ST	£19.99dk	NOVEMBER
AMIGA	£19.99dk	NOVEMBER
SPEC 128	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	NOVEMBER
AMSTRAD	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	NOVEMBER
C64/128	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	NOVEMBER
IBM PC	£19.99dk	NOVEMBER

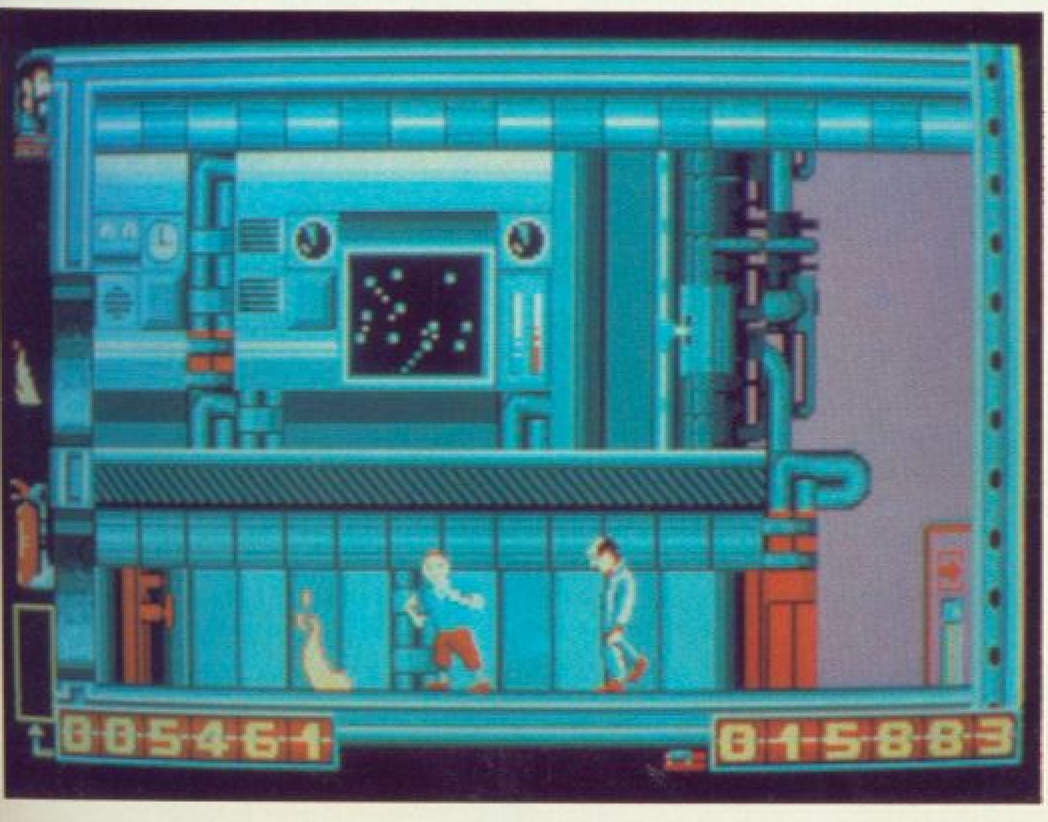
screen is a bar of warning lights. At the start of the section a couple of them will be lit, and during the course of the section more will light. The idea is to use Tintin to put out all the lights. Two of them show pictures of your friends. If they light, it means that on that part of the ship, the appropriate friend has been caught by Boris, and you must untie them simply by touching them. Another one that tends to flash a lot is the fire light. These mean that somewhere on the ship a fire has been started. You have to find a fire extinguisher and put all the fires out. The final light that flashes is the bomb light. This is your main priority. Find the bomb, no matter where it is, and defuse it by touching it. Once you've turned off all the lights and captured the evil Boris by jumping on him or hitting him with the fire extinguisher. Once you've done that, it's back to another bit of flying. And that's the game, aside from a small section at the end where you have to land the rocket on the moon. Not much to it, is there?

And that's the real problem. The graphics are brilliant. They really capture the atmosphere of the cartoon strips, with excellent use of colour and high resolution sprites, though the animation is a little bit on the dodgy side. The sound effects are great too. Lots of spot FX and Snowy's bark is brilliant.

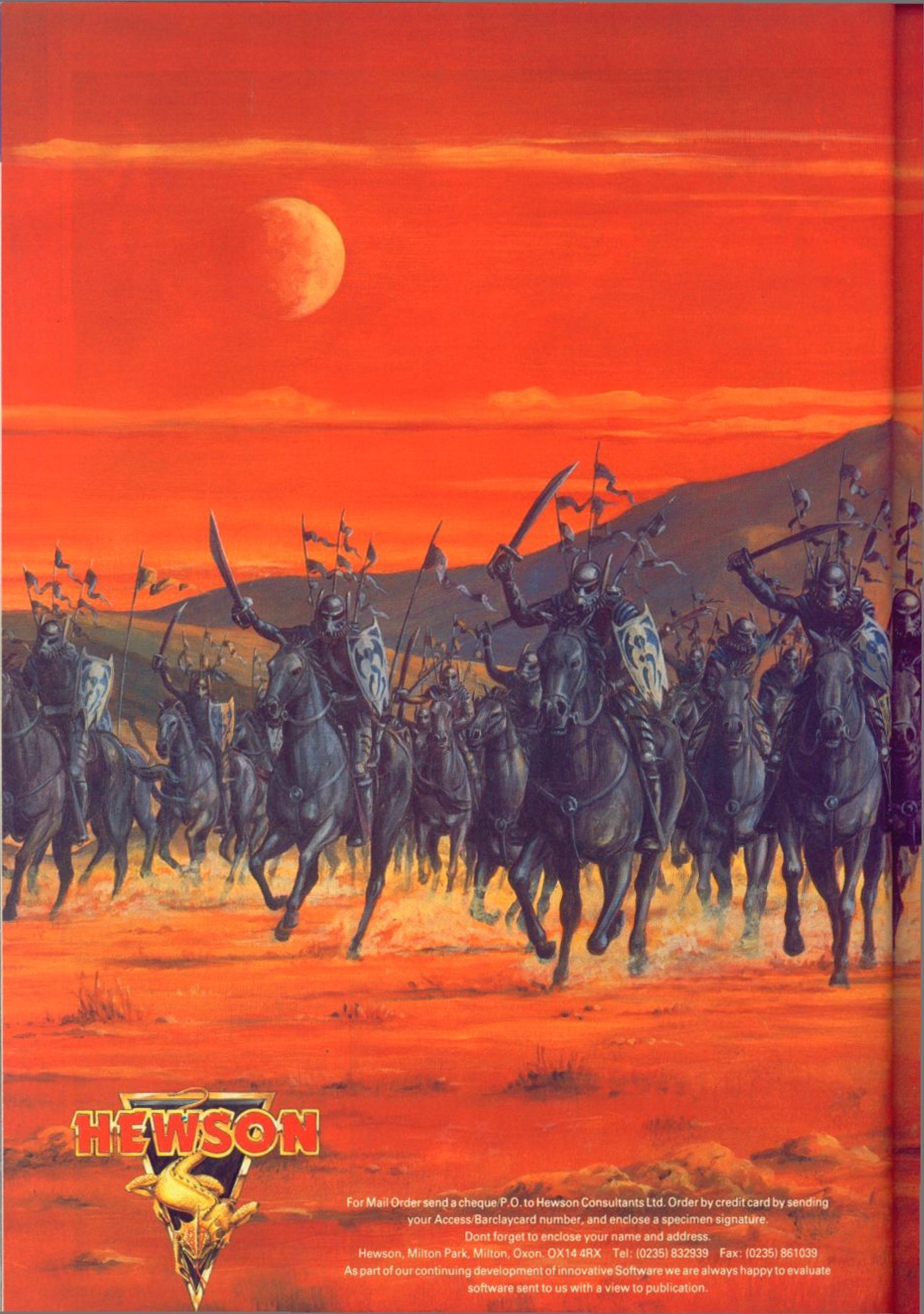
Playability is awful. On the flying section, it's almost impossible to judge where the rocks and pods are going, let alone catch or avoid them, whatever the case may be. On the second section, Tintin walks very fast and in very big steps, which makes accurate control a little difficult. Also, just while you're looking for a fire extinguisher, Boris will start a whole forest load elsewhere on the ship. Boris himself is far too much of a problem. In the way that you can't hurt him, yet he can shoot you, stomp on you, any damn thing he wants to.

Tintin could have been great, the designers had a lot of potential to play around with. Once again, potential has been wasted.

● Tony Dillon.



◀ Oh dear, a fire has been started on board, and Tintin has forgotten to collect the fire extinguisher.



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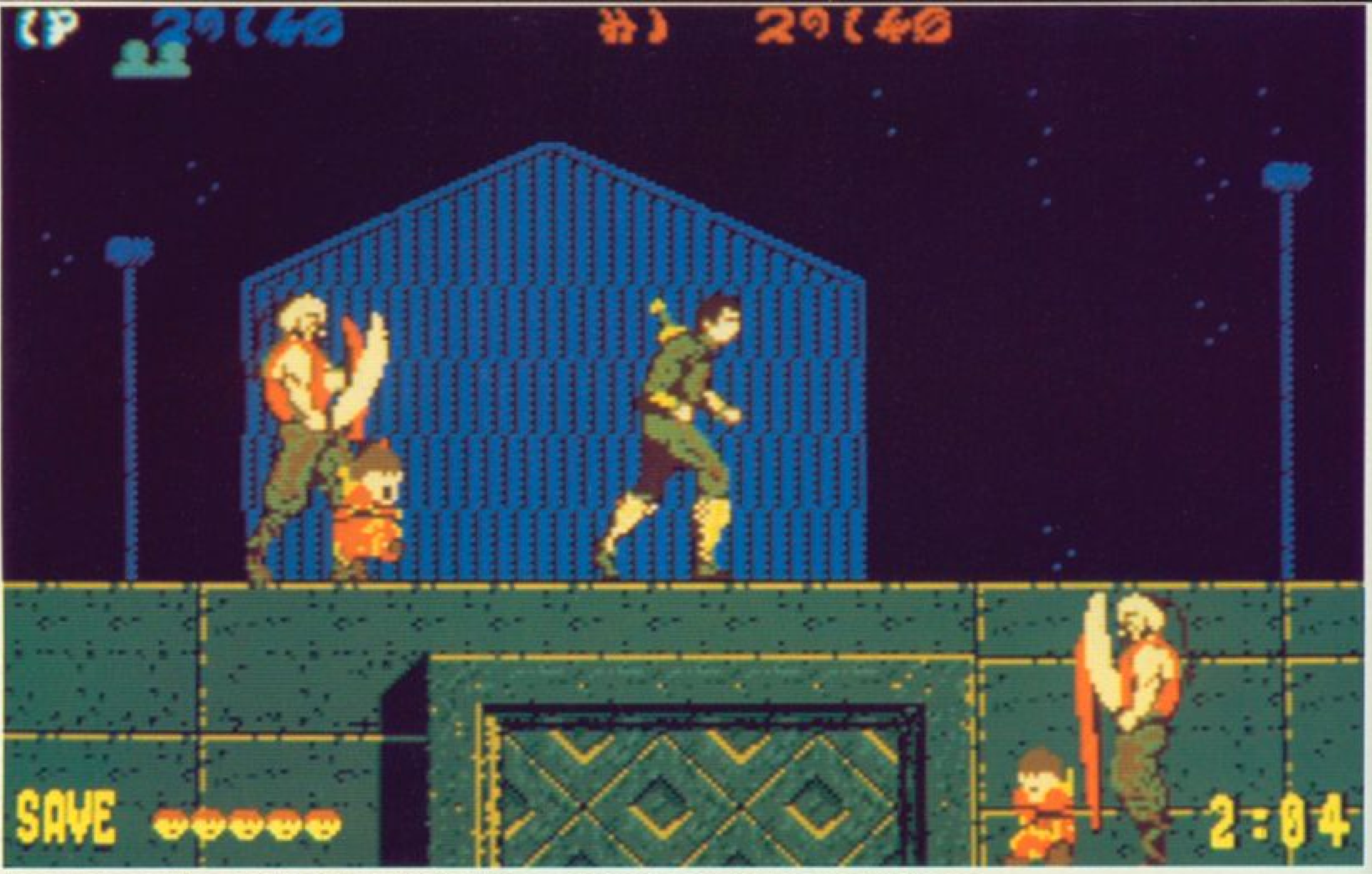

As you can see, the graphics don't do justice to the machine; the soundtracks are equally poor.

SHINOBI

Is VIRGIN's beat-em-up just a load of nunchukkas?*

AS a coin-op, *Shinobi* was no great shakes. It didn't do much to further the beat 'em up genre, and it didn't boast brilliant graphics, sound or action. Even so, it was good fun; and it didn't seem that difficult a task to convert it. What the 16-bit versions got to offer?

The scenario runs like this. On your graduation day from a secret oriental ninja school, Bwah Foo - a former pupil gone to the bad - turns up. With a flash of dark ninja magic he freezes you and spirits away the entire junior class.

Not someone you'd call a complete loony to his face, he issues you a challenge: give him all the school's gold or it's lights out for the kiddies. Unluckily, the school has recently used up all the gold it had; so it's up to you to don those ninja slippers, firmly grab hold of your shurikens and set off.

As the deadline for the ransom is arriving, you find Bwah Foo's hideout. The action's divided up into five missions, each containing three or four multiloaded stages, packed with Bwah's henchmen - gun-toting orientals, ninjas, people who look like Spiderman, and the shield-carrying guards. You'll also find several captives: the number you've got to release on a particular stage is shown in the bottom left hand corner. Once you've freed them all, you can move onto the next.

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At the end of each mission you'll face a hefty boss, who's usually about ten times tougher than anyone you've faced on the level so far. Getting killed by him/it is pretty easy, so you'll be grateful for a couple of continue options.

AMIGA VERSION

The first thing you notice is a droning tune, followed by some horrible graphics. The badly-animated and blotchy sprites seem to slide along the ground; the backdrops are very poorly coloured and the scrolling is jerky. You can get some fun for a while, but not much.

GRAPHICS	**3**	**IQ FACTOR**	**2**
AUDIO	**3**	**FUN FACTOR**	**4**

ACE RATING 392

ST VERSION

Like the Amiga, except that the character jumps a little more slowly, which makes accurate control difficult. A very poor program which captures little of the coin-op's addictive, if simple, gameplay.

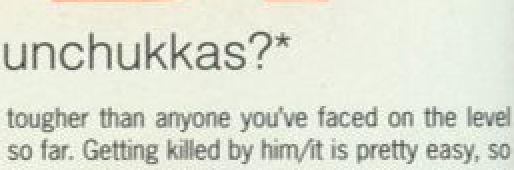
GRAPHICS	**3**	**IQ FACTOR**	**2**
AUDIO	**3**	**FUN FACTOR**	**4**

ACE RATING 385

Each stage is set against a time limit - if you complete it within the time, your remaining seconds are converted into bonus points. You can also get points and extra power-up weapons (for example, a pistol) for rescuing the cute little ninja kiddies. Pressing the space-bar activates your ninja magic - your man goes crazy, unleashes some smoke trails and splits into many parts. It works a bit like a smart bomb.

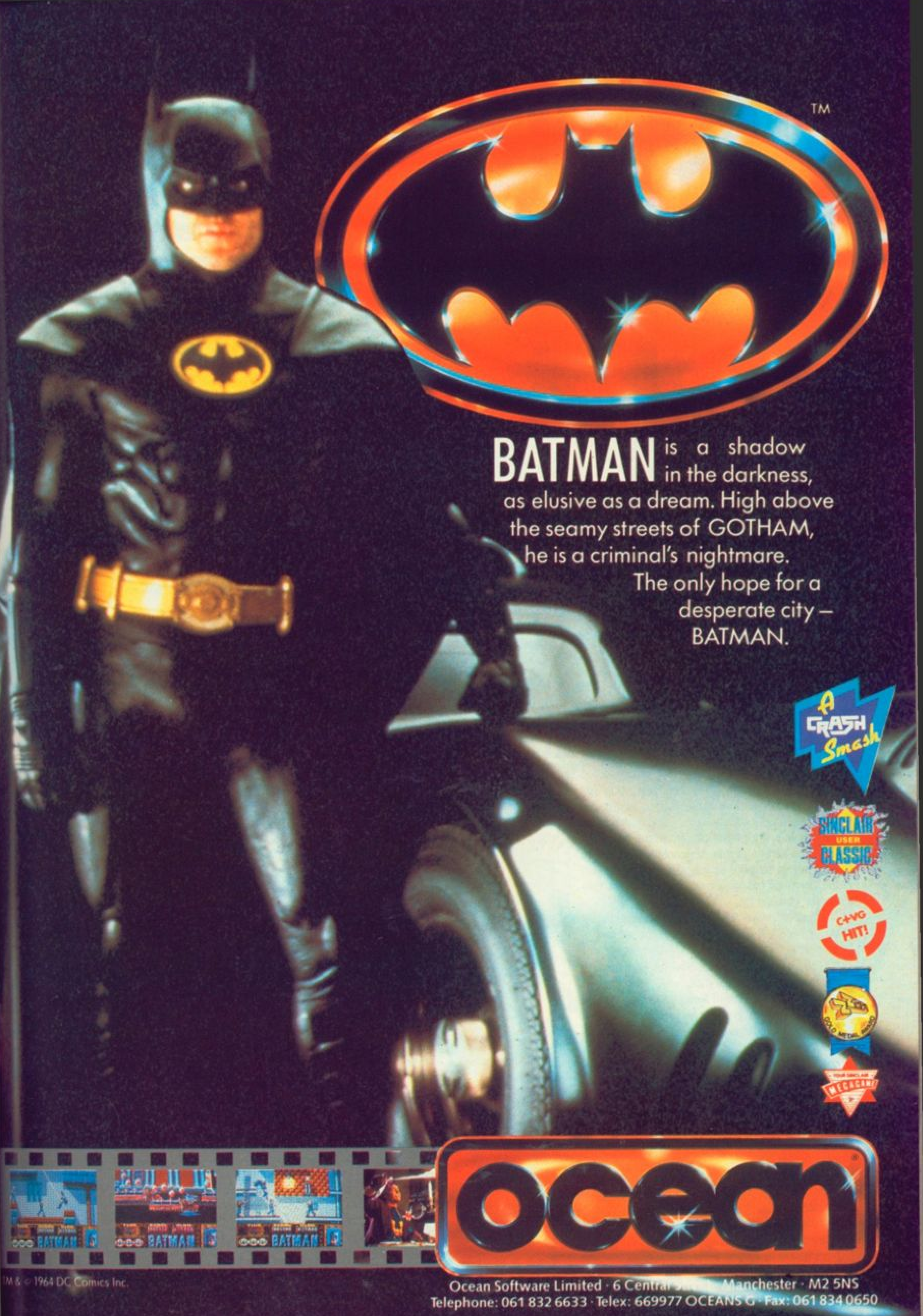
If you like the coin-op, you won't favour these conversions much. They're visually and aurally very poor, and the control method is a awkward. The nunchukkas are going to fly if we get any more like this!

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A bit depressing, eh? Not really much one can say, apart from avoid...

*** Nunchukka: an oriental weapon capable of inflicting serious damage...So now you know!**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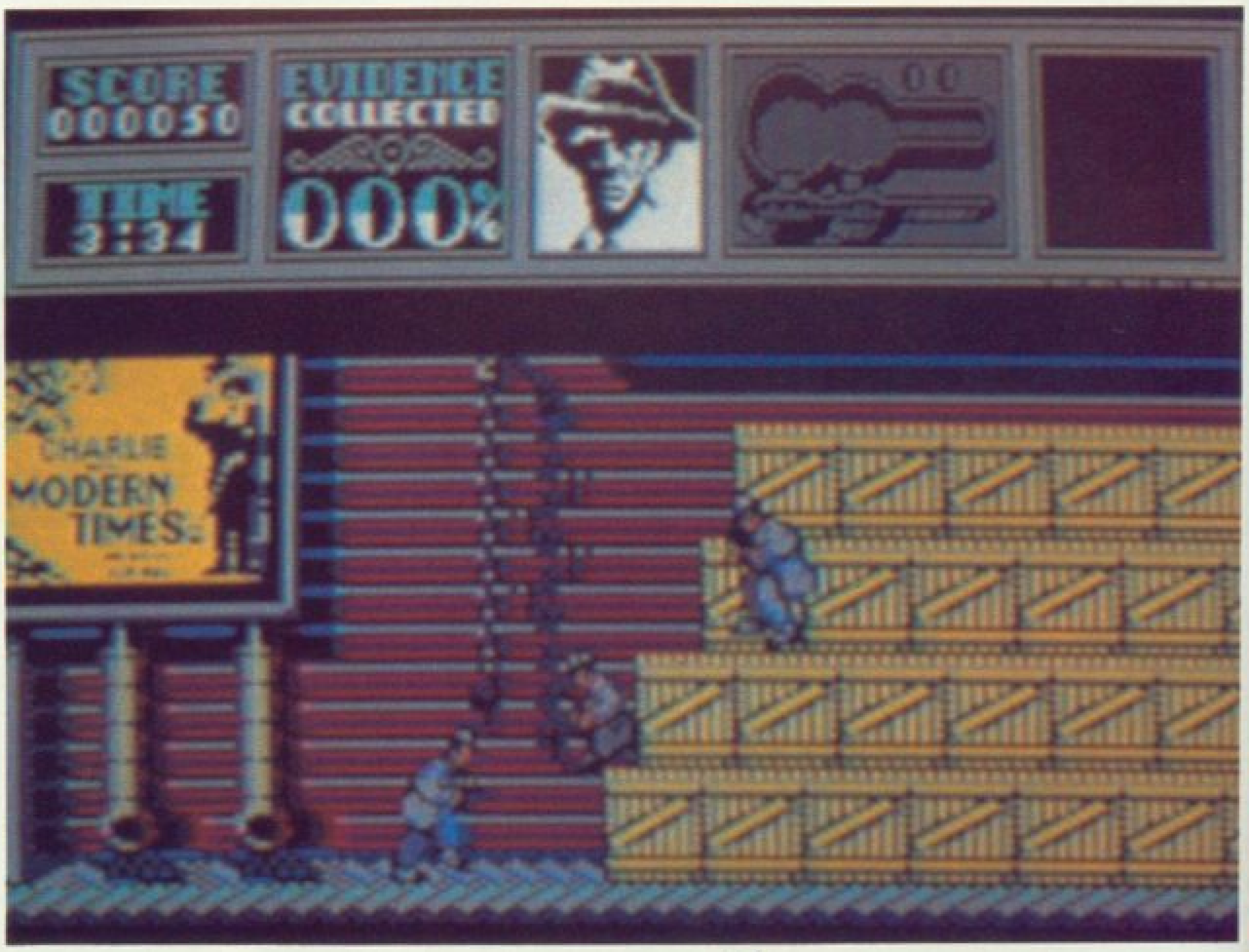
UNTOUCHABLES

EASY TOUCH FOR OCEAN

THE *Untouchables* was the film that finally secured Sean Connery's position in the Hollywood league of super stars - and not before time. It's totally brilliant, out on video, and worth £1.50's of anyone's money. But the main point about it is that it provides excellent material for a computer game - And – surprise, surprise – Ocean have the rights to the computer game.

The game follows the plot of the film closely - unlike their other current film licence (ACE-rated in these very pages) Batman, which picks up on just a few of the more action-packed sequences. Say what you like about licenses – they may be a license to print money, but if they were all produced to Ocean's standards we'd probably be happy to spend it.

The Untouchables casts you as Eliot Ness, leader of the crack team sent to a warehouse where you have to find ten pieces of evidence concerning the illegal bootlegging of booze.



The untouchables earned their name because they couldn't be bought off by the Mob. When it comes to film licences for games a certain Manchester software house are pretty untouchable themselves.

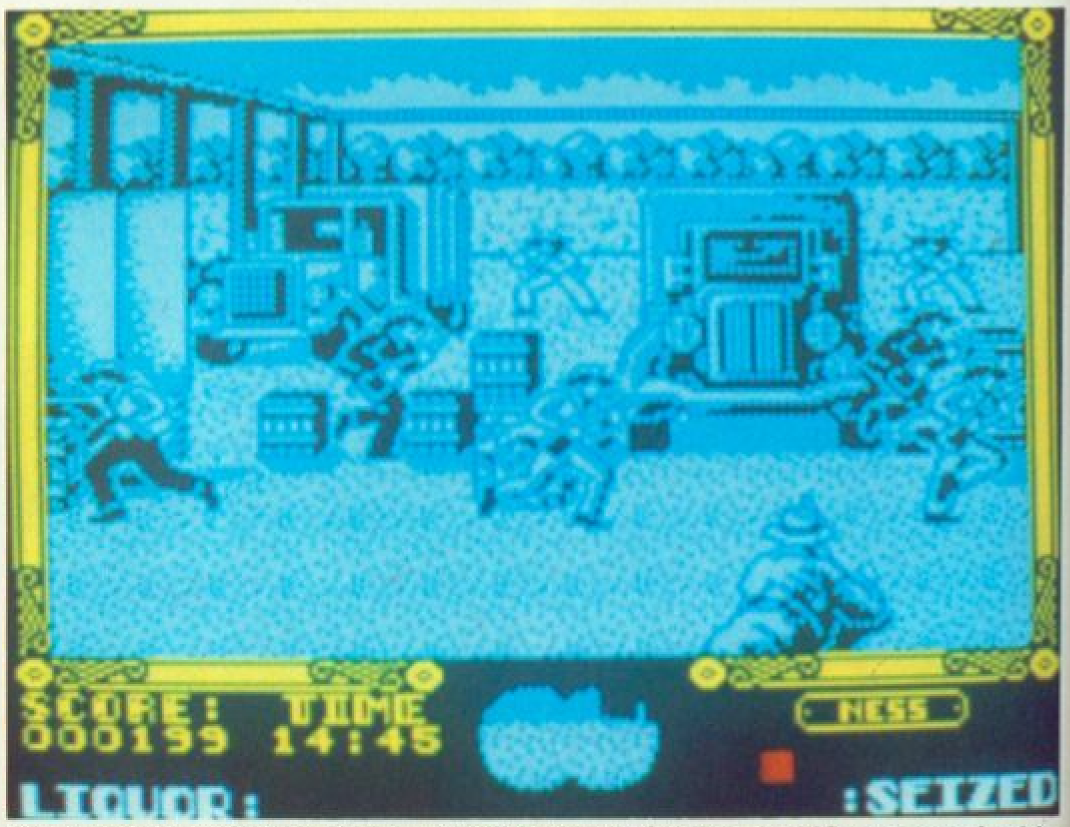
Succeed in this level and you soon get down to some serious shoot 'em up aggro with heavy Capone types as the game reproduces the famous bridge shoot out scene from the film. The screen scrolls horizontally from left to right in this section, as you attempt to pick off the criminals hiding behind cars with your telescopic gun sights.

If you survive this one then it's time to set up a 'meet'. A railway station is chosen but of course it's a double cross. Ness reaches for his 38, or rather you do it all for him through the medium of your joystick.

If your joystick and Ness do make it to the station then you get to play a starring role in yet another famous shoot out – one of celluloid's greatest moments of combat that rivals any scene you'd care to mention from recent releases - including Die Hard. Capone's men have a hostage in this scene - so only a crack shot can win the game with 'dead eye' precision on that famous '38. The game concludes with Ness shooting it out with a bunch of hoodlums on city rooftop.

We were hoping to receive a reviewable version of The Untouchables for this issue, but the software was delayed at the last moment so don't expect to see the game on the shelves until late October – we'll send the ACE boys round to give it a hard time, and you the review, next month.

Meanwhile, Ocean have a 'certain other film licence' with which they intend to extract a few Bat-bob out of you before they launch *The Untouchables*. If the latter is as good as the Holy Game of Gotham, then it'll be worth waiting for.



The illegal liquor factory scene on the Spectrum. Eliot Ness and his men are about to break up the party. Al Capone isn't going to like it.

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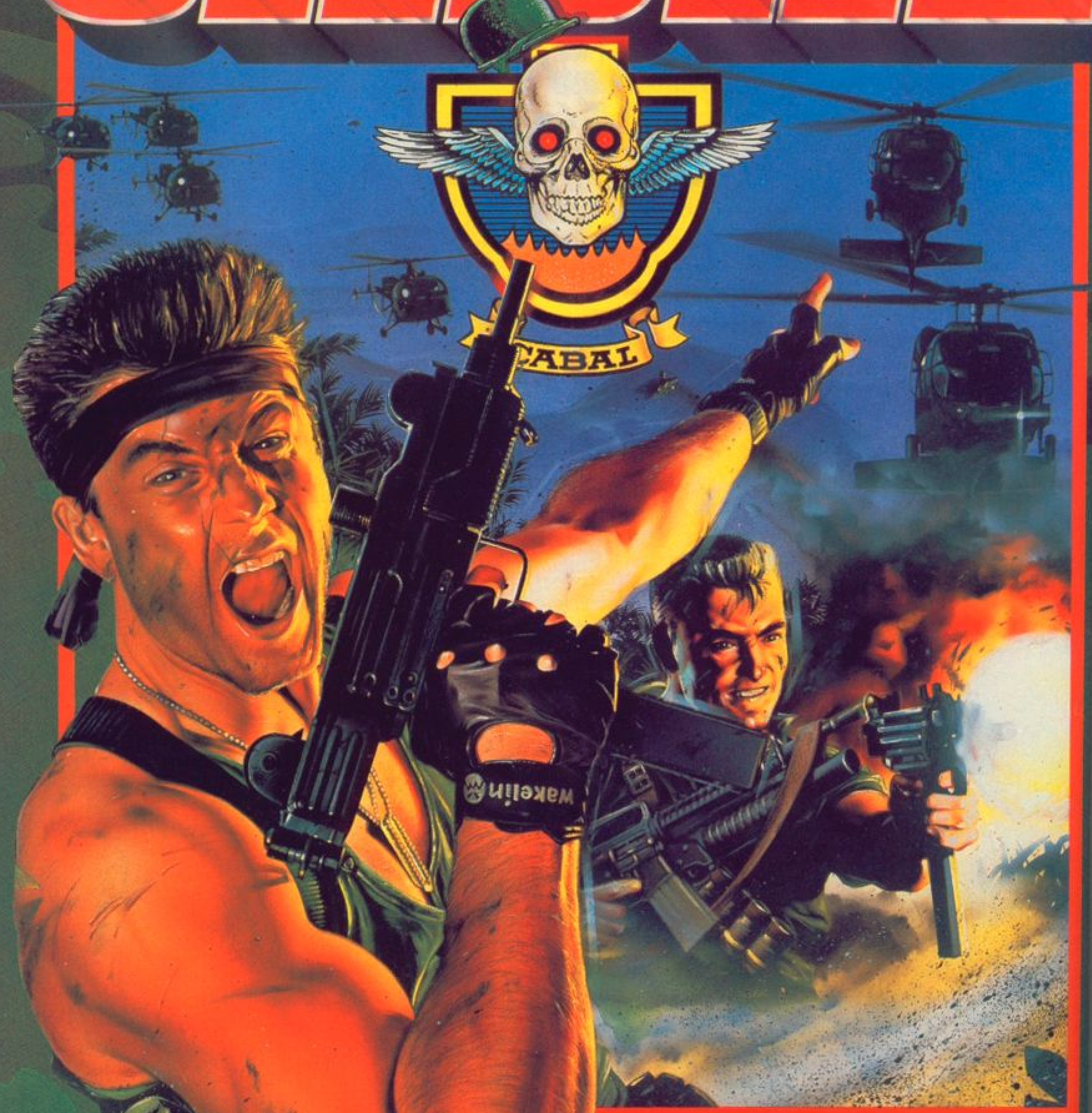

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DAY OF THE VIPER

ACCOLADE attempt to revitalise 3D maze games.

WAY back in the days of the good old ZX81, when the computer entertainment industry was still in its infancy, a software designer by the name of Malcolm Evans wrote the best game ever to appear for that machine. It was called *3D Monster Maze*, and was set, not surprisingly, inside a large maze with two inhabitants: You, and a rather hungry Tyrannosaurus Rex.

Despite the primitive graphics of that early Sinclair machine, and the fairly limited gameplay, the game managed to generate a superb atmosphere that kept me, amongst others, coming back to the game again and again.

Now, eight years later, on a machine many times more sophisticated than the ZX81, Accolade have produced another 3D maze game. Although Accolade's offering is more colourful, more complex, bigger, more varied, and faster, in essence the gameplay has much the same appeal, and the same shortcomings.

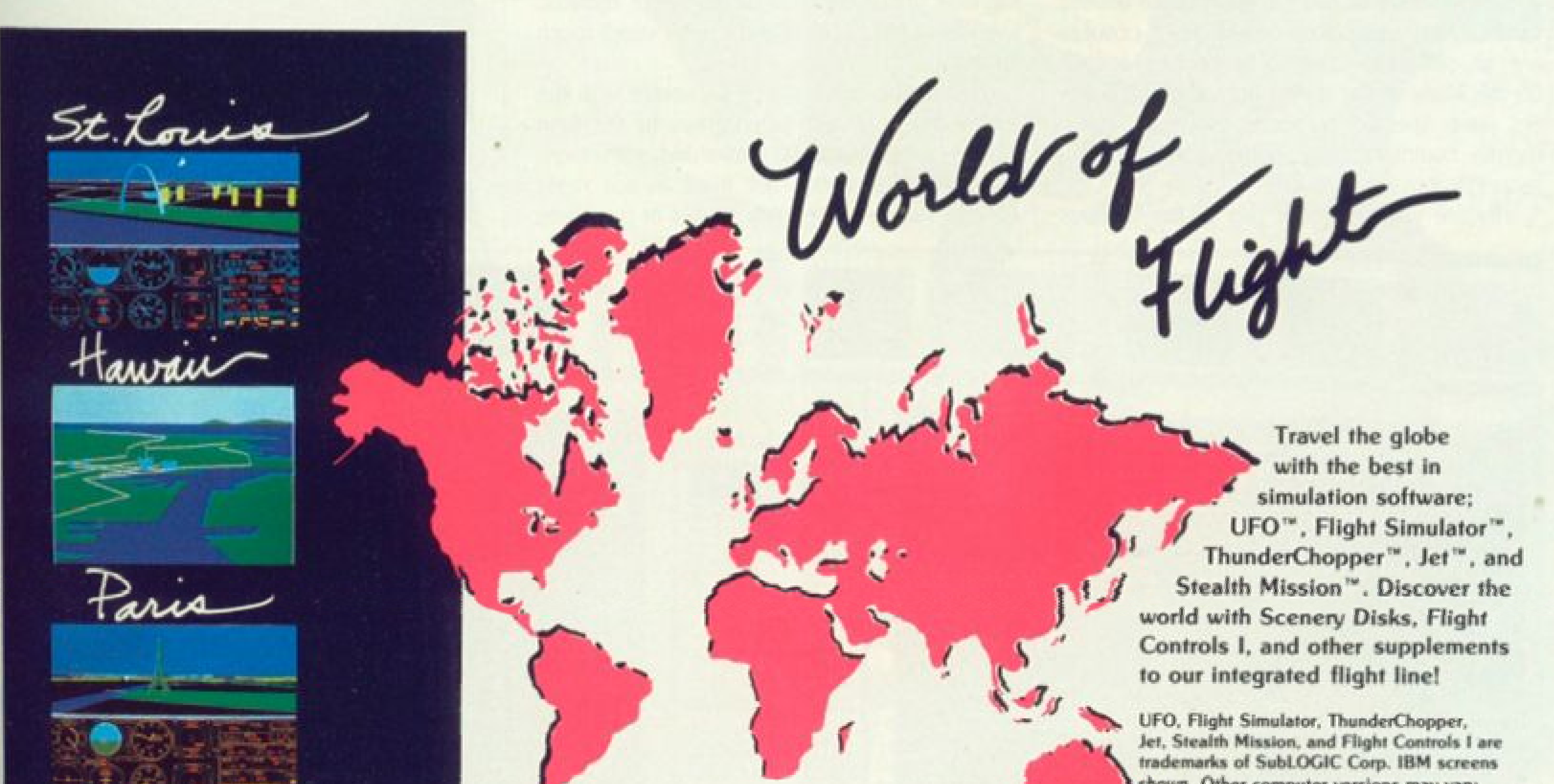
The story behind *Day of the Viper* centres around a fairly important chappie known as GAR (Genetic Android Race). GAR was created as a prototype artificial man who could be given all the boring dirty jobs that nobody else wanted to do, and would never complain about them. GAR was at first a great success, but very soon began to experience Neurosynthetic melding; the robot equivalent of a bad migraine. This did not make him too enamoured of his creators, so he decided to get his own back and spawned an unstoppable robot army.

Now GAR and his metal minions rather cutely called GAR-goyles (groan!), have taken over the Sun League Defence Force Base Complex (a situation somewhat akin to Colonel Gadaffi overrunning the Pentagon)!

Obviously something has to be done. The Sun League realise in the typical fashion of governments that their space fleet isn't really up to the task of ridding the galaxy of this latest Frankenstein's monster so they cast around for an alternative solution.

Fortunately for mankind there is an answer: the Nexus Project. The project involved the creation of the Vipers – powerful attack androids operated remotely by highly trained human operators.

Your job is to remotely control a Viper unit



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to infiltrate the base and reactivate the defence computer. (It's amazing what you can do with a humble ST isn't it?) This is the only way to destroy GAR and his buddies and prevent him from wiping out humanity.

The Viper craft displays show two monitors and a number of icons. The right-hand monitor is the most important as this shows a 3D view of the maze in front of you, as well as the pointer for manipulating objects, and gunsights (when your weapon systems are activated). The left-hand monitor toggles between various other displays.

The most useful of your status displays is a plotter which makes a map for you as you explore. A very welcome feature in a maze game! There are also other navigation aids like floor coordinates (which can be recorded at strategic points for later reference), and a heading indicator. All these items are quite essential since the corridors on all the floors are exactly the same shade of dull; identical in almost every respect.

You also have to hand various other items of equipment to assist you in your quest. Each of these is powered by a different component on your circuit board. These can be destroyed if you sustain too much damage. You will then have to hunt for replacement components to regain use of the equipment that has been affected.

Damage is incurred by stepping on mines or encountering GAR's evil buddies. These malevolent contraptions have a nasty habit of sneaking up on you from behind and firing away while you are still in the process of turning. Getting rid of them can also be a bit tricky since most of your adversarys must be hit in specific places if they are to be destroyed.

Before you can enter any of the rooms on a level you have to find the appropriate access cards. These are colour coded (as of ccourse are all self respecting 24th century access cards). Many of the rooms are vacant, but others have specific purposes, such as repair rooms, communication rooms, power rooms, security rooms, and so on.

Before you can make use of the facilities available in any room, however, you must posses the appropriate piece of equipment for use in that room. For instance, you require a communication module.

These items are scattered about the complex and can be collected and placed in your ten storage compartments until required. There are also other goodies to be found lying about in corridors, including power restorers, and damage repair pods.

One ingenious and very useful aspect to the game is the use of the right mouse button. By pointing to any object in the game and clicking the right button your message window will identify the object for you. This is extremely handy when you come into a room that appears to be full of interesting items only to be informed by your message window that it is in fact vacant or empty. Just think of the fruitless minutes trying to manipulate background graphics that you have been spared.

Each floor takes a fair time to explore, so when you consider that there are five buildings, each with five floors, you realise that you are not going to finish this game in a single evening. This wouldn't be so bad if the exploration of floors was a little more interesting.

Getting from floor to floor is achieved using the lifts. Finding the location of the shaft in each building is no easy task, so you will have to explore at least one floor of each building thoroughly before you can progress. To move from building to building you must locate the shuttle, which is another tedious affair.

While *Day of the Viper* is a brave attempt to revitalise a hackneyed idea, it doesn't really add enough to the tedious process of exploring the mazes to make it enjoyable. Once you have been wandering around for a while you will begin to get bored with the same old unchanging view of the complex through your monitor. Even the collectable objects don't inject much variety.

No doubt, players who persevere with the game and manage to progress to the later stages will be suitably rewarded with more interesting gameplay, but there is not really enough variety in the early stages of the game to sustain interest for long. The problem is that all of the locations look the same or very similar, so once you have seen one floor, you've seen them all.

The game reminds me a great deal of *Short Circuit I* which was another potentially good piece of software, spoilt by unimaginative and unvaried graphics. For my money Viper is too much like those old 3D maze games to have any real appeal.

● Laurence Scotford

ATARI ST VERSION

Neither the graphics or sound on this game really stretch the ST, and the gameplay is very much 8-bit. Having said that, there is a game in the somewhere if you are prepared to persevere. Decidedly average!

GRAPHICS 6 **IQ FACTOR 7**

AUDIO 6 **FUN FACTOR 6**

ACE RATING 625

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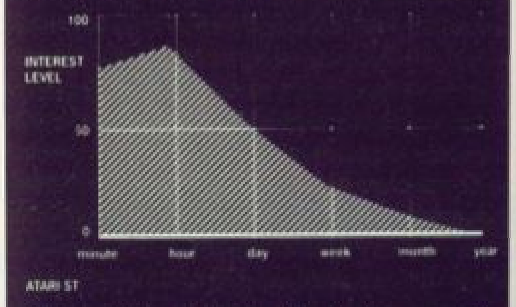
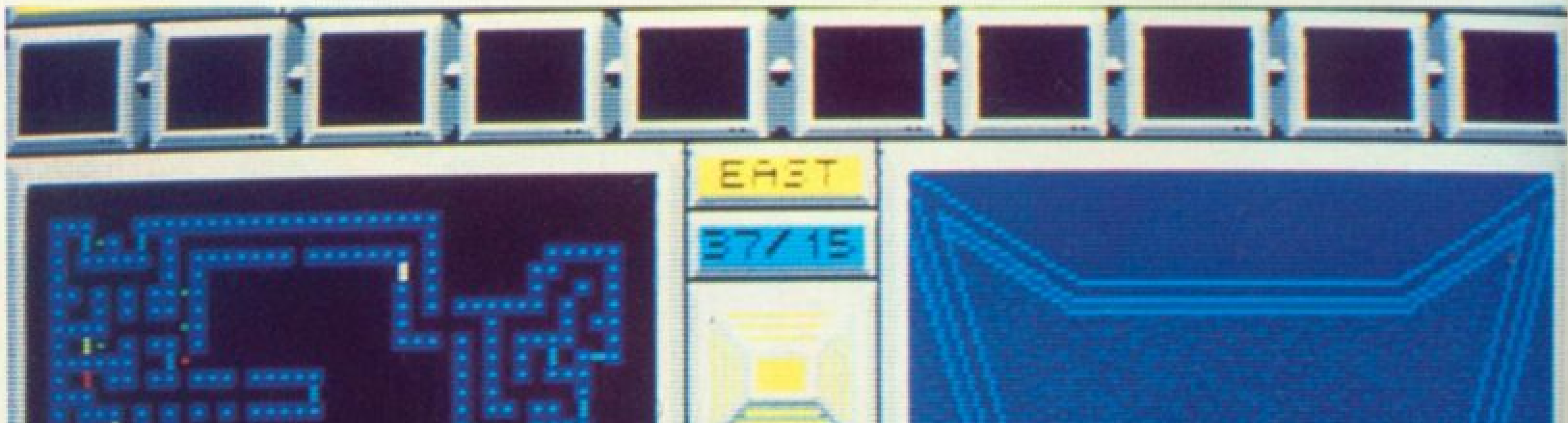
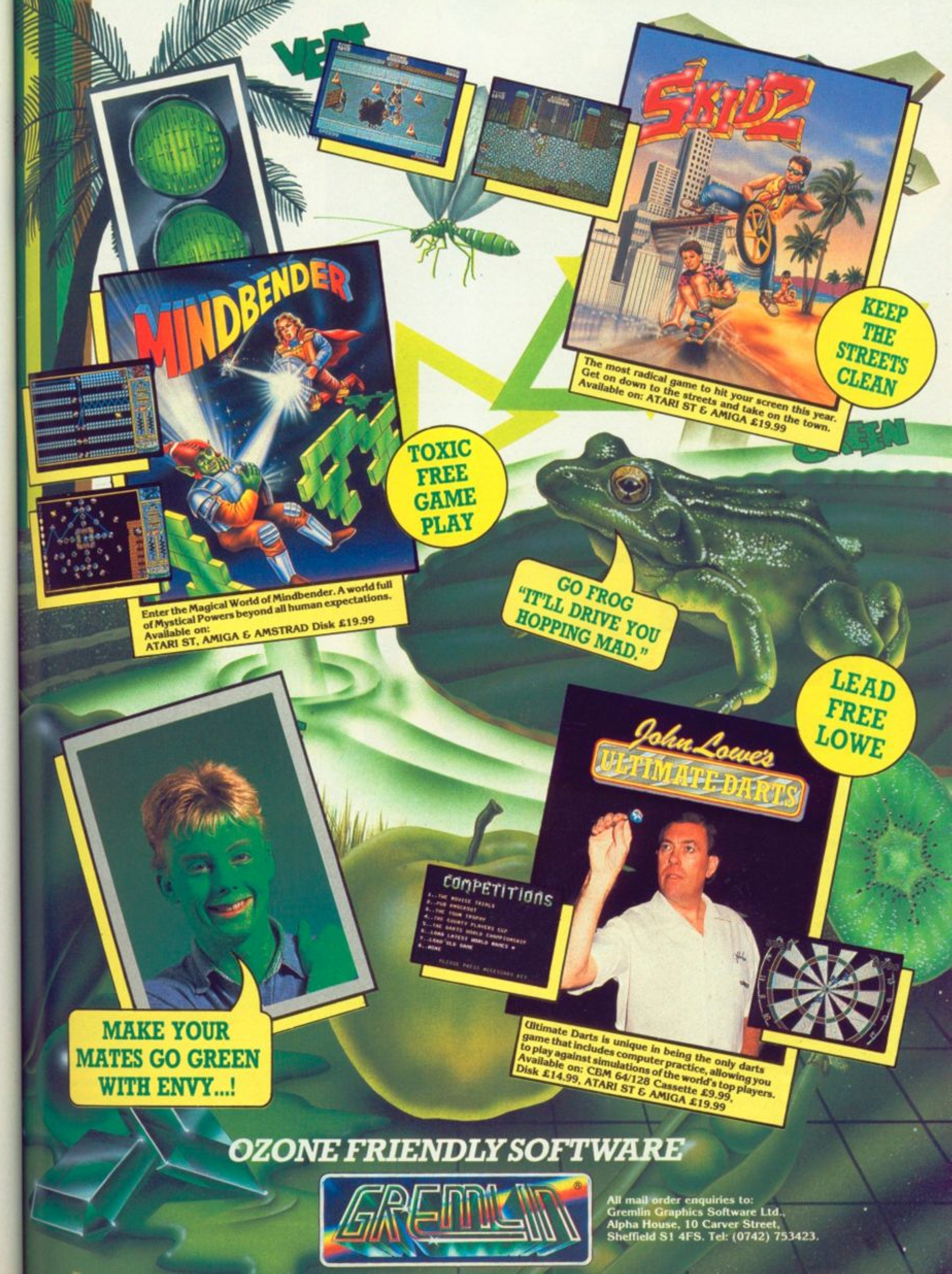


Will probably get better the further you get, but how many people will stick with it?



GO GREEN – GO GREMLIN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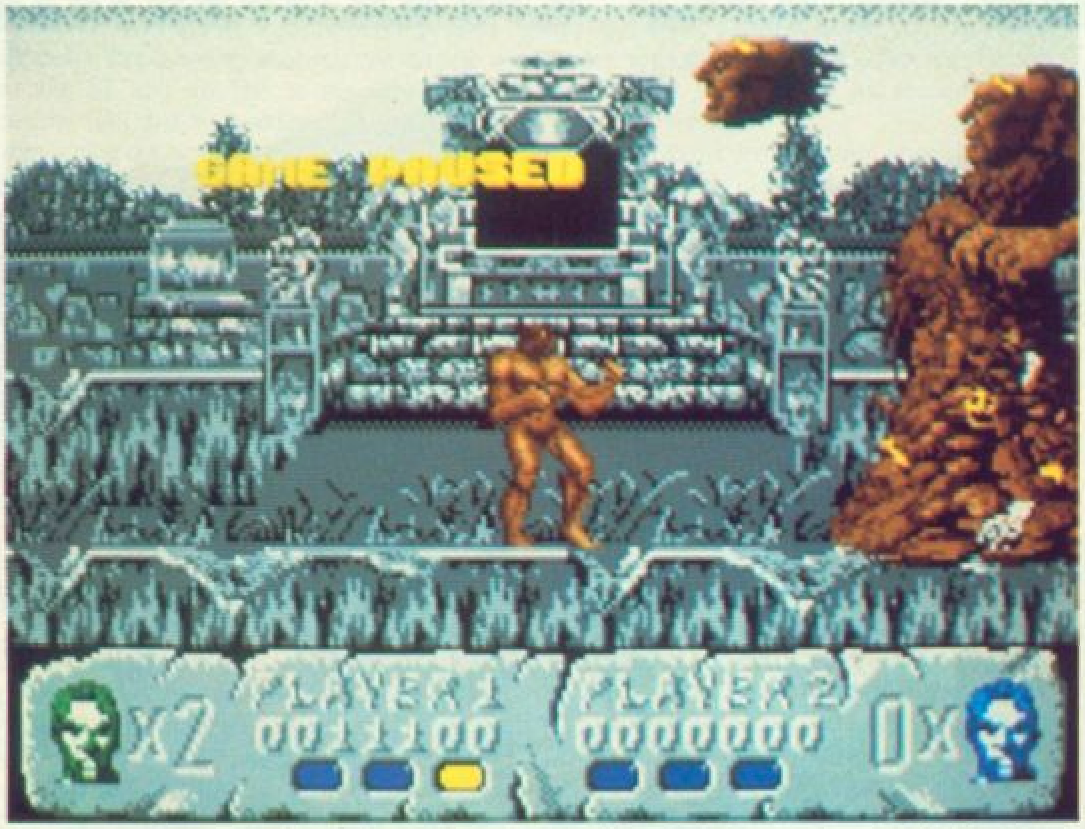


Strongman faces the first incarnation of the evil Lord of the Underworld, Nelf, abductor of the Goddess Athena.

ALTERED BEAST

Activision present Sega's Beast of a game unaltered...

The forces of darkness have gathered together, and Nelf, Lord of the Underworld has captured the goddess Athena. Zeus, who's more or less the top dog in the pantheon, decides that the only way to deal with the bothersome Nelf is to raise a brave and fearless warrior from the grave and endow him with supernatural powers.

This is where you come in. You are quietly rotting away in your grave when Zeus comes along, revives you, and commands you to save his daughter. You begin as Strongman, and have a fairly limited repertoire of attacking moves. These are executed in the time-honoured tradition of beat-em-ups, by using various combinations of joystick movements and the fire button to achieve punches, kicks and jumps.

Your opponents, the minions of Nelf, have a number of different methods of attack, the most odd being that employed by the jumping rock creatures. If you fail to dispatch these quickly they will completely envelop your head, causing death if you fail to shake them off quickly.

Most of Nelf's creatures can be destroyed easily once you have learned the best technique for dealing with them. For instance, the majority of your opponents on the first level can be put out of action safely by delivering punches or sweeping kicks from a crouched position.

Some of the creatures, when destroyed, deposit a mystical globe. If you collect this before it disappears off the edge of the screen, you are awarded extra powers. The extra power is most likely to be a power punch. This gives your punches and kicks an added boost.

Occasionally the globe causes you to be transformed into a type of beast with greater powers than Strongman. The extra powers you gain in your transformed state are pretty well essential when you come to the end of a level. Here you meet an incarnation of the evil Nelf himself, which differs on every stage. He takes quite a bit of battering before he disappears off to the next stage, and while you are trying to dispatch him you are bombarded by a barrage of nasties, intent on your destruction.

If you do manage to complete a level you are, unfortunately, deprived of any powers you may have gained before you continue. This means that you begin each stage as Strongman with no power punches, and you must build up extra powers again during that level.

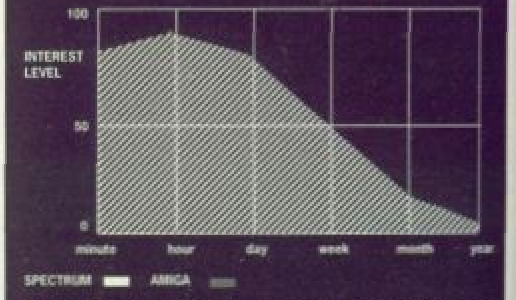
The original Sega coin-op was admittedly not the most stunning game to have emerged from the company recently, but it did have the virtue of being very playable and not too difficult to get into. This first class conversion shares the same qualities. It certainly doesn't break any new ground, but both graphics and sound are very competent, and the gameplay is superb.

The game is probably at its best when the two-player option is selected, but if you play on your own you should still find yourself making some headway after a little practise.

If you don't like beat-em-ups then there is not much here to interest you. If you enjoyed the arcade original, however, then you will not be disappointed by Activision's effective conversion.

● Laurence Scotford

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



A good conversion but you will probably get board of it quite quickly.

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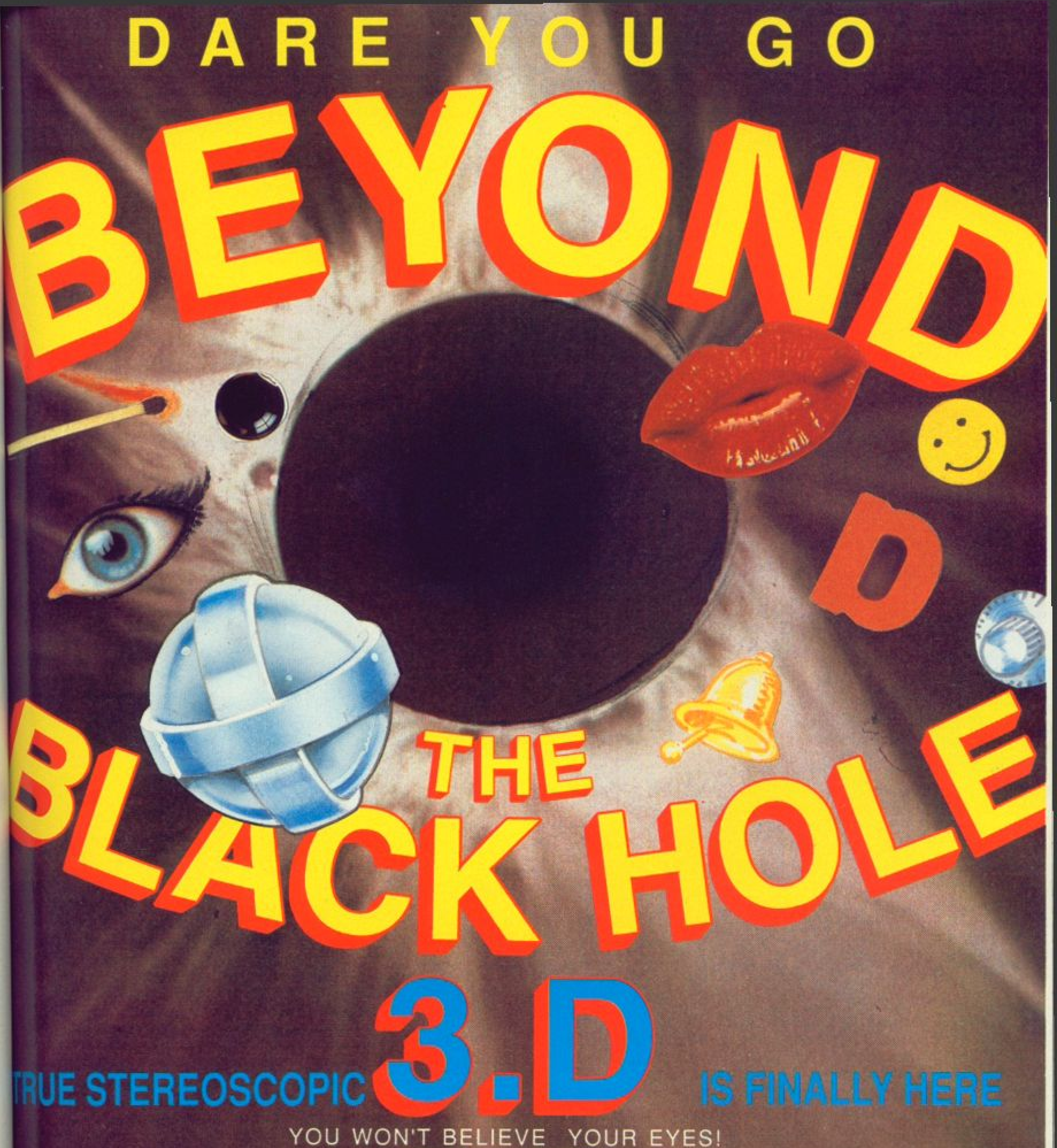
AMIGA VERSION

There is nothing here that really stretches the Amiga, but it is a good game nevertheless. In terms of gameplay it has the edge over the similar Shadow of the Beast from Psygnosis, although the latter has superior audio-visuals. Definitely a good buy if you like this sort of thing.

GRAPHICS	**7**	**IQ FACTOR**	**3**
AUDIO	**6**	**FUN FACTOR**	**8**

ACE RATING 825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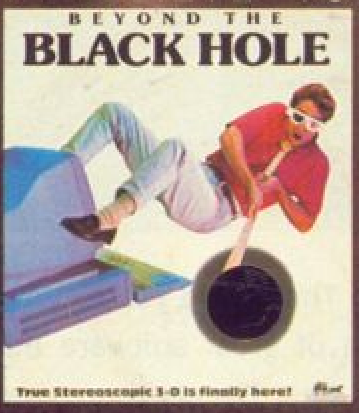
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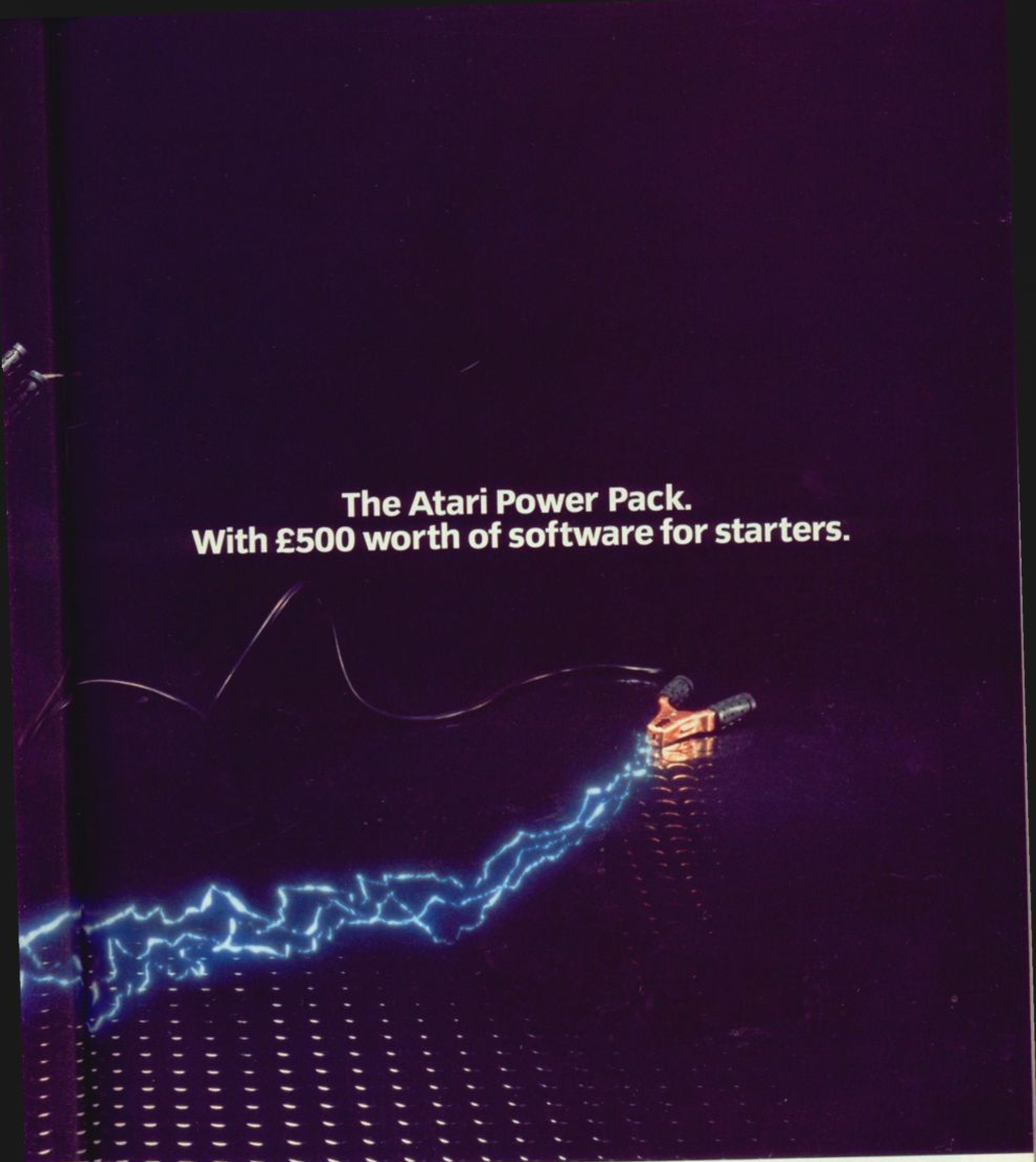

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RAINBOW WARRIOR

Microprose leave tanks and planes behind and get Environment Friendly

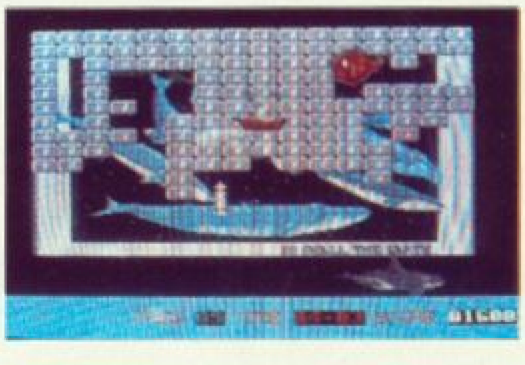
WITHOUT a shadow of a doubt *Rainbow Warrior* is the bravest and most adventurous software launch of 1989. This is especially true when the firm behind the product is Microprose, a company renowned for its military simulations, rather than games that actively discourage violent action in favour of peaceful lobbying on environmental issues.

The intention behind *Rainbow Warrior* is to inform while entertaining. The game is divided into six mini games, each of which represents a different campaign. These can be played in any order, but they must all be completed before you can play the final game, *Free the Spirit of the Rainbow Warrior*.

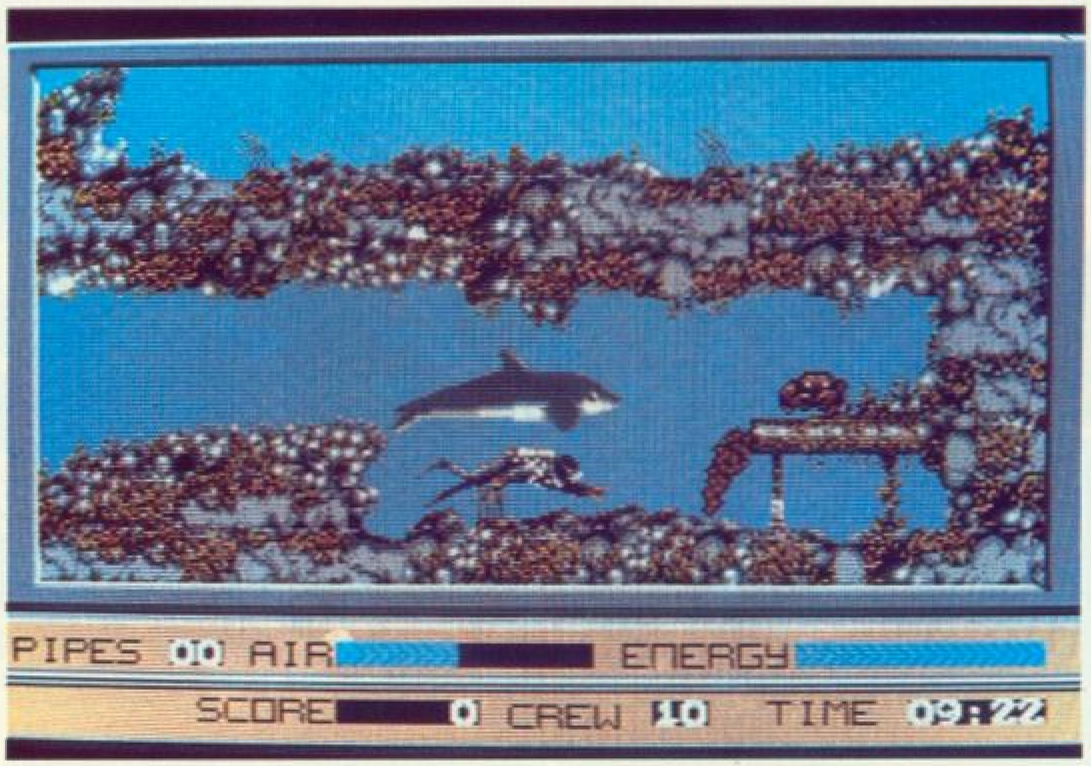
Campaign I:Radioactive Waste simulates the prevention of the discharge of radioactive waste at sea. You control a dolphin and must guide a diver down to four pipelines which he then blocks. The route to each of the pipelines is infested by a number of hazards, including nets and mutated sea creatures, which have various detrimental effects if the dolphin or diver comes into contact with them. The general appearance of the game is very similar to the ancient Scuba Dive from Durrel Software. Unfortunately it lacks the latter program's playability, and the resulting game is frustratingly boring.

Campaign II: Ocean Dumping of Nuclear Waste requires you to clamber aboard the dumping ship 'Gem' and climb to the top of the three dumping cranes thus disabling them. The crew of the dumping ship attempt to prevent you doing this by *spraying you with a hose, or* throwing things at you. They also patrol the deck and will throw you overboard if they catch you. The game is so easy that it is hardly worth playing. Indeed I would be surprised to learn of anybody failing to complete it on their first attempt.

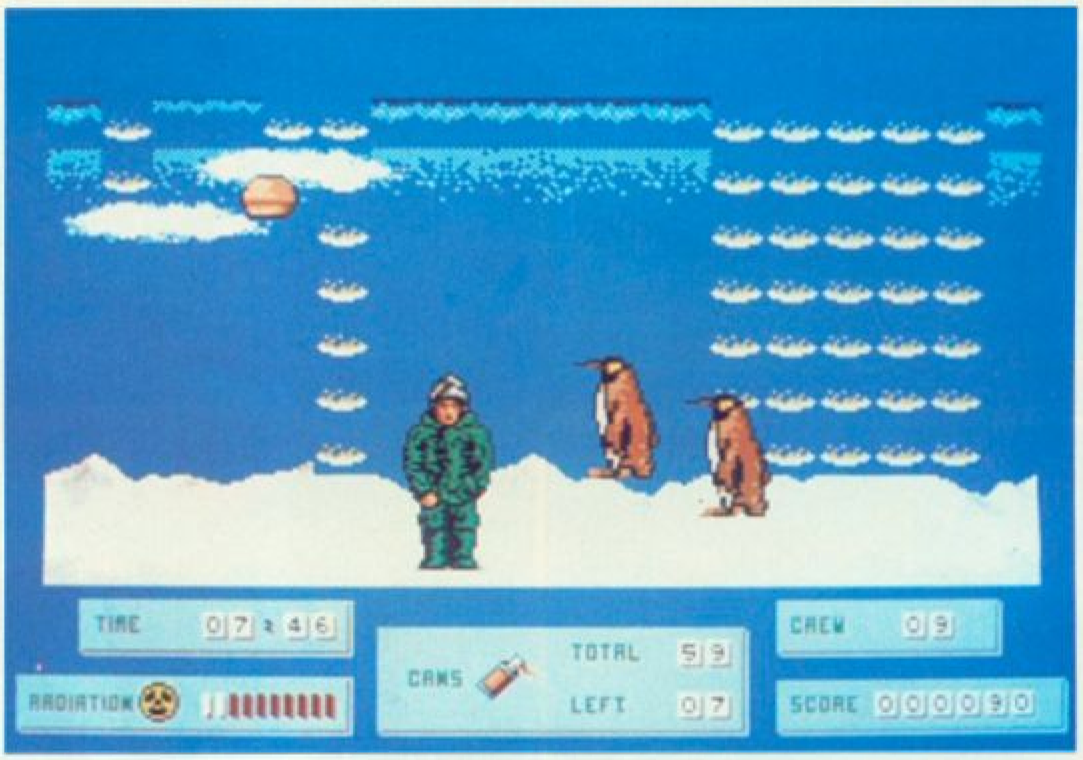
Campaign III:Save the Whale is easily the best of the bunch. You control a killer whale



Breakout revitalised by a killer whale



Shades of Scuba Dive but with none of the playability.



Watch out for the killer penguins!

which moves left and right beneath a picture of the Greenpeace 'Save the Whale' poster. By firing balls of water at the poster you cause parts of it to appear. Meanwhile various objects traverse the screen. Some of these will begin to hide the poster again if you hit them, while others will help you out by revealing large sections of poster or awarding you high power super balls. While this mini game has more playability than all the other games put together, it is still very easy.

Campaign IV: Stop Acid Rain is based upon a Greenpeace demonstration in 1984 in which climbers successfully hung 'Stop Acid Rain' banners on several offending chimneys across Europe. In this simulation you must collect the individual letters of the phrase 'Stop Acid Rain' from passing inflatables, and hang them from the correct chimney. A workman, policeman, and occasional trucks are all hazards which must be avoided if you are to succeed. The collection and deposit of banners in the correct places is a miserably tedious affair, and you soon begin to look forward to being run over by the truck rather than have to endure seeing the game through to the end.

Campaign V: Stop Ozone Depletion would be hilarious if it wasn't so pathetically simple. Your task is to prevent the depletion of the ozone layer by throwing snowballs at attacking aerosol cans. If the cans manage to destroy all the ozone in one particular spot a radioactive ray appears which you must then avoid. This ray also affects the normally docile penguins who develop a sudden lust for blood. The sight of the red killer penguins bouncing with murderous intent towards the campaigner had me in stitches, especially when I discovered that they could be deterred by a landing a cold snowball on the beak!

Campaign VI:Save the Seals from Culling has you leaping between ice floes armed with a can of spray-on-dye (CFC free one hopes), in an attempt to save the baby seals from the hunters. Despite frequent attempts, I repeatedly failed to spray the seals. Either I was missing the point of the game or it is completely unplayable; given the evidence of the previous games, I suspect the latter.

The final game *Campaign VII: Free the Spirit of the Rainbow Warrior* will not, I feel, be played by many. The onerous task of battling through the six boring and unplayable mini-games in order to qualify is likely to prove too much for all but the hardiest games players.

Rainbow Warrior is sadly a wasted opportunity. While it is a game that breaks the mould and branches into territory that has been previously ignored by both software houses and games players, all it is likely to succeed in doing is discouraging any similar attempt in the future. I cannot fault the graphics, sound, or general presentation. I thoroughly commend the concepts and philosophy behind the game. But, as much as I would like to, I cannot honestly recommend this product to anybody. Too little thought has been given to playability, and in consequence a potentially exciting and unique game has been ruined.

The only inspiring aspect of the product is the manual. This contains fascinating accounts of the Greenpeace campaigns that the games are based on, and even then most of this information has been lifted from *The Greenpeace Story* by John May and Michael Brown.

If you really want to learn about and support Greenpeace then you are better off not buying this game and sending the money directly to the organisation instead. Do otherwise, and you are sure to be disappointed.

● Laurence Scotford

ATARI ST VERSION

The graphics and general presentation are very nice, and the game plays rather pleasant dittys which change with each sub-game, but the whole thing is extremely unplayable. Definitely not recommended. Go and join Greenpeace instead!

GRAPHICS 7 **IQ FACTOR 4**
AUDIO 7 **FUN FACTOR 1**
ACE RATING 425

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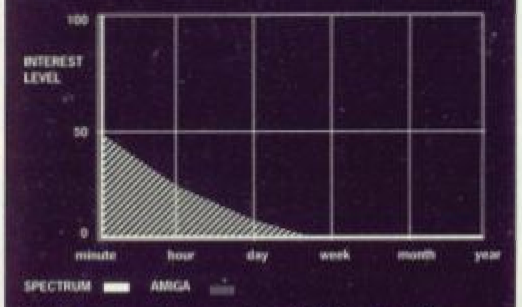
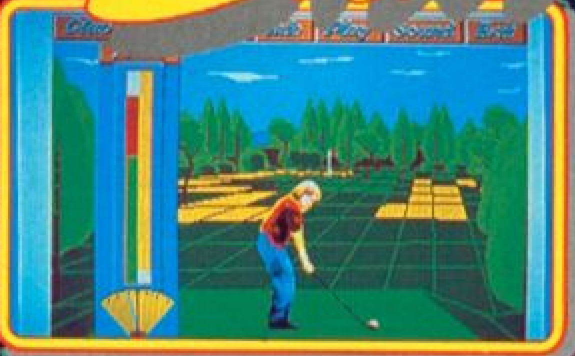
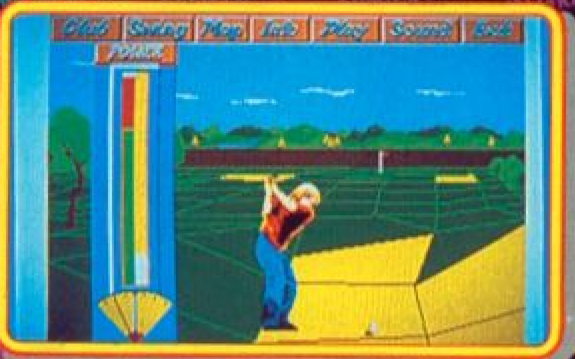


Will be played once, then filed in the bin.

Can you survive the Shark Attack

Greg Norman's
ULTIMATE GOLF


Club
Swing
Play
Sound
Exit


Club
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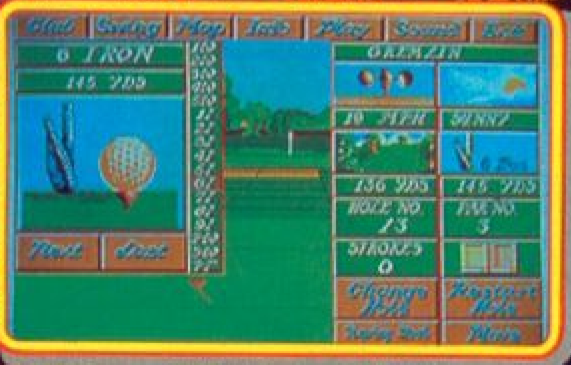
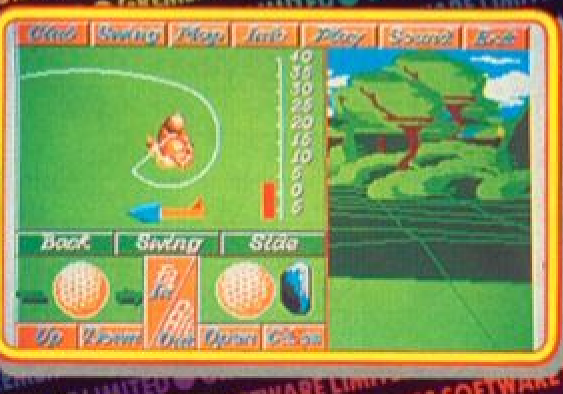
Map
Info
Play
Sound
Exit
POWER


Club
Swing
Map
Info
Play
Sound
Exit
6 IRON
145 YDS
GREMLIN
10 MPH
SUNNY
136 YDS
145 YDS
HOLE NO
13
PAR NO.
3
STROKES
0
Next
Last
Change Hole
Restart Hole
Replay Shot
Menu


Club
Swing
Map
Info
Play
Sound
Exit
Back
Swing
Side
Up
Down
Open
Close

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abilities, from arcade addict t
simulation enthusias
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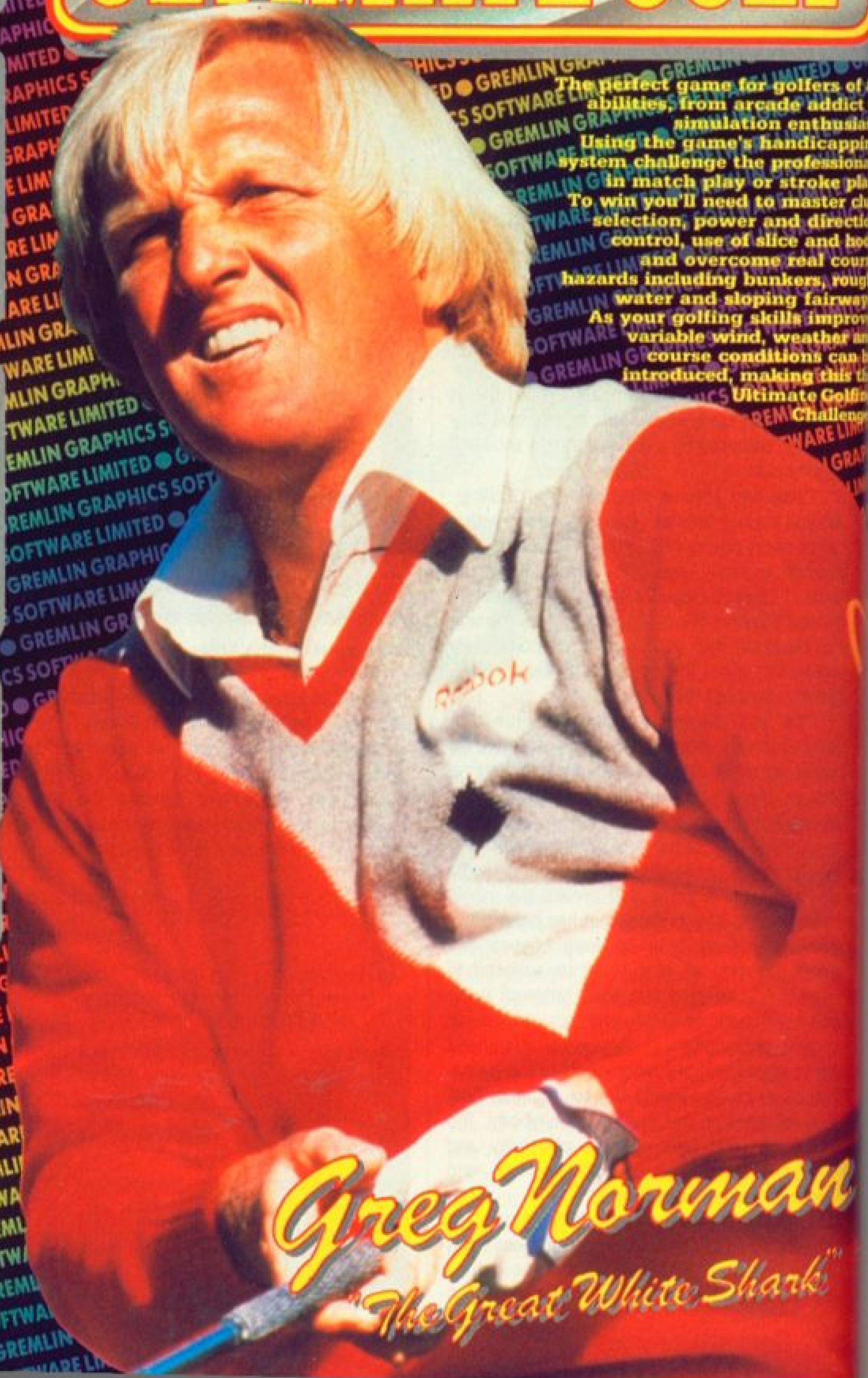
system challenge the professiona
in match play or stroke pla
To win you'll need to master clu
selection, power and directio
control, use of slice and hoo
and overcome real cour
hazards including bunkers, rough
water and sloping fairway
As your golfing skills improv
variable wind, weather an
course conditions can b
introduced, making this th
Ultimate Golfin
Challeng



Greg Norman
"The Great White Shark"

Screen shots from various formats.

ATARI ST, CBM AMIGA, IBM PC
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CBM 64/128 £14.99 Cassette £19.99 Disk

GREMLIN

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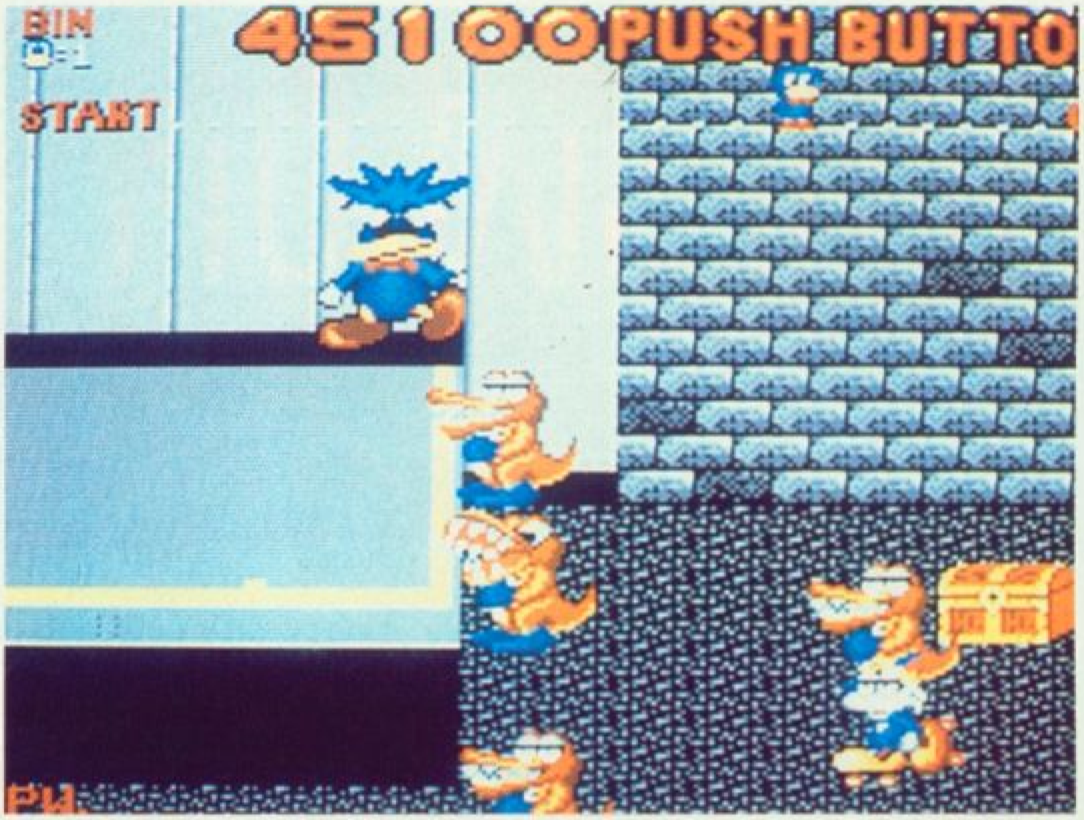
Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: (0742) 753423.

You've got plenty of choice among the baddies you can beat up. If you don't like the moose-heads or the boxing crocodiles, you can always pick on giant bouncing bunnies or manic moles



DYNAMITE DUX

ACTIVISION'S cute coin-op conversion involves a very silly mix of beat-em-up and shoot-em-up action – but does it fit the bill?

DUCKS – who can resist them? Lucy certainly couldn't, before she got kidnapped by the evil Achacha The Great, that is. There she was, gaily gambolling and frolicking with her feathered friends, Bin and Pin (the dux), when suddenly a great black shadow appeared, trapped her in a miracle ball and whisked her off to Achacha. Now, no self-respecting web-footed creature would refuse the chance to rescue her, would it?

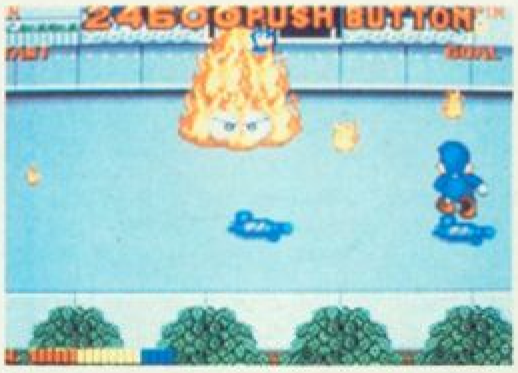
This is where you take over, guiding Bin (with a friend able to play Pin) through the six very cute (but dangerous) scrolling lands of Achacha. These are evil places filled with all manner of awesome creatures: moose-heads, dog-heads, bouncing bunnies, roaring boxer crocodiles, cows on clouds, Sumo pigs trundling around on trolleys – and that's just for starters! At the middle and end of each land you've got to do battle with some heavyweight nasties. For example, in the jungle you'll fight a huge rock-man, and in Japan a dragon and an angry weather-formation.

To help you progress, you're adept in the art of biffing nasties on the nose. There are two basic combat moves: punching, which gets rid of most opponents straight away, and a mega-punch, caused by holding down the firebutton, which puts the wind up larger enemies. Luckily, there are also weapons lying around which keep you armed to the hill: a rocket-launcher, guided missile gun, flamethrower, rocks, bombs and water pistols. The biggest is not always the best in some situations...

You can fire and fight in eight directions – useful, because some enemies turn round and try to bite you, or sneak up from behind. All weapons, however, have a limited lifespan, as shown at the bottom of the screen. The ducks have a similar power meter for each of their four lives; when these lives run out, you've an option to continue for three more credits; otherwise it's apple sauce time for our web-footed friends.

A conversion of an obscure coin-op, *Dynamite Dux* is excellent fun to play. It can be frustrating when you're on your own and you keep getting mashed by an end-of-level opponent because you haven't got the firepower, but that's the only niggle. If you like your action cute and feathery, this is the game for you.

● Gordon Houghton



There are two big nasties on each level. The first one, half way through, is tough; the second, at the end, can only be tackled by real hard ducks

AMIGA VERSION

With colourful, cartoony graphics and a series of brilliant soundtracks to accompany each level, all you need is appealing and challenging gameplay to keep you hooked. The Amiga version has all these qualities – so take a look!

GRAPHICS 8 **IQ FACTOR** 3
AUDIO 8 **FUN FACTOR** 9

ACE RATING 842

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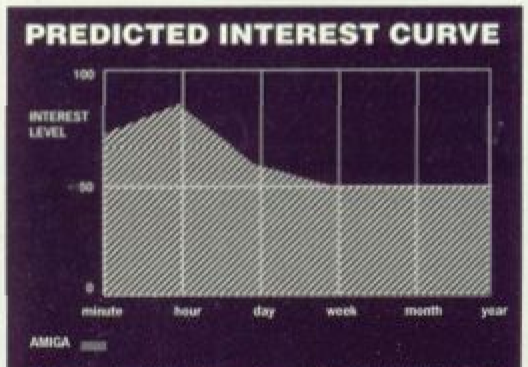
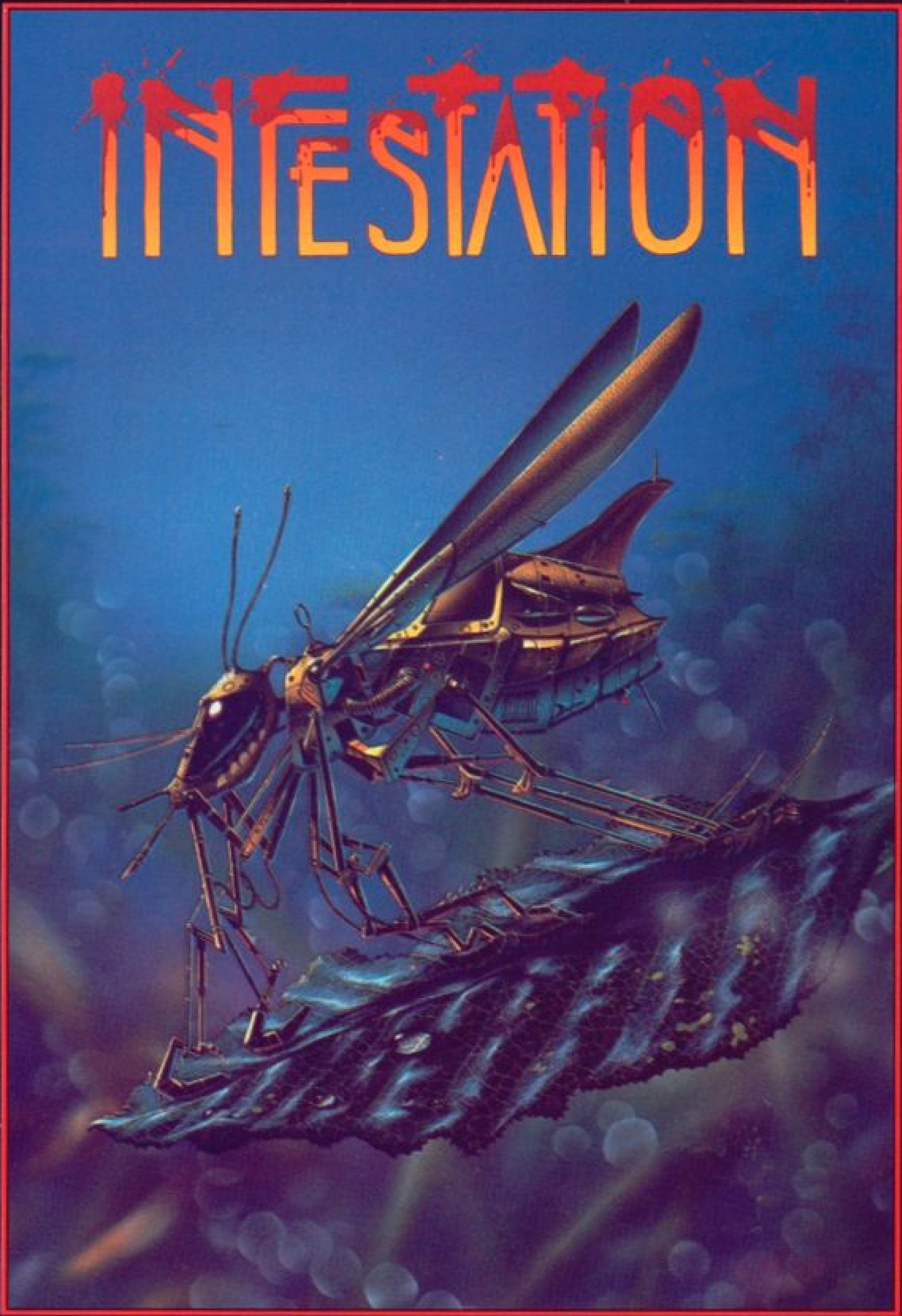
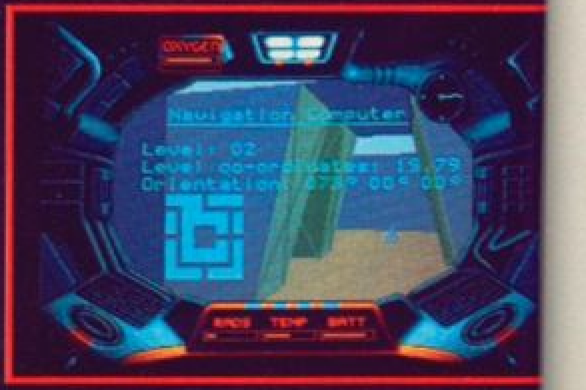
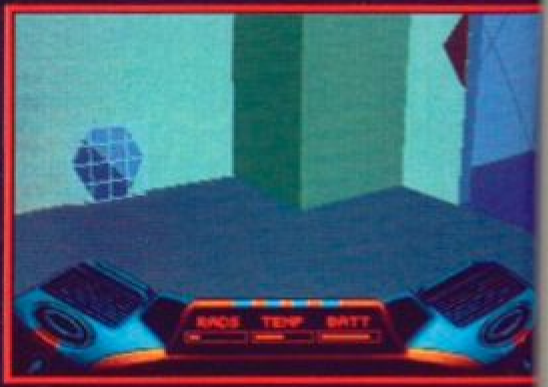


A typical addictive cutey, with high initial satisfaction giving way to lower, but more long-term addiction.


INFESTATION


OXYGEN
Navigation Computer
Level: 02
Level co-ordinates: 19.79
Orientation:
RADS
TEMP
BATT


RADS
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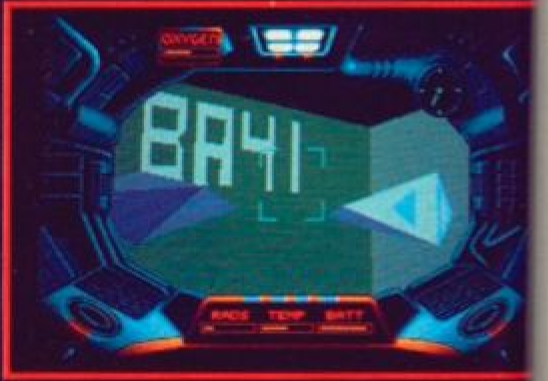
OXYGEN
BA41
RADS
TEMP
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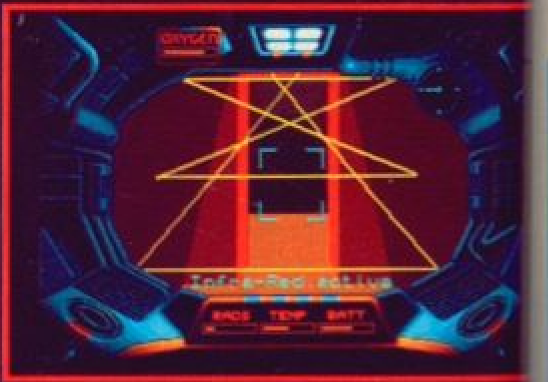
OXYGEN
Infra-Red active
RADS
TEMP
BATT

INFESTATION

Are you ready for a new level of realism in computer games? Are you prepared for an atmospheric experience you will never forget? Can you cope with super-fast solid 3D vector graphics? Will you venture into the unknown, alone, and armed only with a single pulse rifle? Can you overcome the INFESTATION?

INFESTATION takes computer games to a new level of realism. It creates a complete environment stunningly rendered in super-fast solid 3D vector graphics. You are completely free to move within the game world, examining and manipulating objects just as you would in a real world. And, as in reality, you are not alone. Only, unlike those on Earth, the other occupants of Infestation's world are not very friendly at all . . .

Your task as Kal Solar, Agent of the Interplanetary Federation, is to travel to Alpha II, investigate and end the alien threat. Your mission will not be an easy one. As well as the mother alien and its eggs, you will have to deal with hostile droids and computer systems, radioactive areas, and things unknown.

INFESTATION is a truly atmospheric experience. Don't play this game when you're alone . . . it may well be your last!

Screen Shots from the Atari ST version AMIGA/ATARI ST £24.95

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LAPTOP CHESS

MINDSCAPE's mind game on the move

ALL you businessmen on the move are really sick and tired of playing with your spreadsheets on train or plane or in the car. What you really want to do is have a game of chess on that swanky portable PC that the bosses have chained to you. At least, that's the theory behind *Laptop Chess*.

You might wonder why it's called *Laptop Chess* since, as far as I can see, it is actually the *Cyrus Chess* program for the PC from back in 1985-86. What makes it Laptop is, of course, the support for portable displays. You can, of course, use it on any PC compatible as well.

The display is reasonable enough with clear, if not elegantly designed, pieces. You can toggle between 3D and 2D views simply by pressing T, but you'll doubtless prefer – as with any chess program on any computer – to play with the overhead view.

As far as the portable displays the machine is specifically aimed at are concerned, we've only been able to test it on an Amstrad PPC640 – a screen that is not the classiest in the world by a very long shot. In 3D mode Laptop was virtually unplayable, and even in 2D it was hard to spot the marker indicating the piece you wanted to move. Otherwise it was fine, with no problems (and no excuses) in distinguishing black and white pieces. On screens superior to the Amstrad's, the game should look pretty good no matter what dimension you choose to play.

Most of the features you would want are available in the program, although there are several points that betray its age. There is no option for the computer to suggest a move to the player, and there is no information in the program or in the simple (laptop?) manual as to the strength or response time of the game's 16 playing levels.

Strength is difficult to assess, but it's fairly safe to say that at levels up to 3 or 4, *Laptop* does not play a scintillating game. Thereafter it gets stronger, but the response times grow. As a terribly busy businessman or woman you'll have to decide whether you prefer strength or speed.

● Pete Connor

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THE MASTER'S VOICE

We'll be introducing a special chess rating system in ACE in the very near future. In the meantime, should you get Laptop Chess?

It's certainly not the best version of chess around, nor is it the most attractive, but it should keep you happy on the train – and it may well be the only one you can use on certain portable displays.

If you're after a chess program for your portable, why not port it around to the shop and test the software out before buying?

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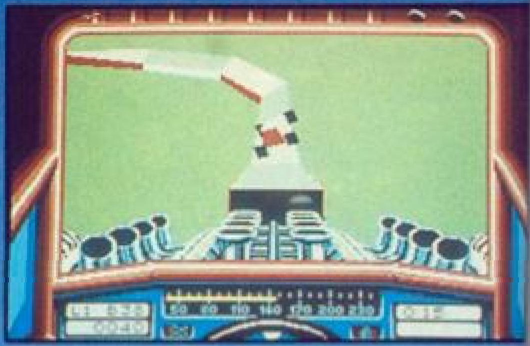
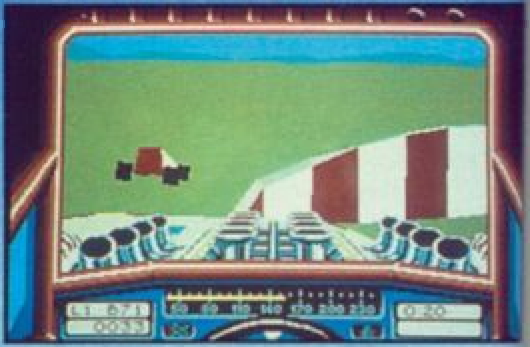
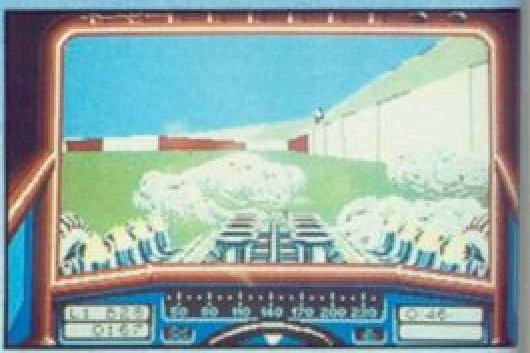
STUNT CAR RACER







Stunt Car Racer is available for ST, Amiga, PC, Spectrum and Commodore 64

Step into the driving seat of one of the most wicked stunt cars around as a Stunt Car Racer. It's now up to you to prove just how good you are and to see whether or not you can ultimately become Division One Champion.

With a super-quick, turbo-charged V8 engine that will power you to incredible speeds, and long-travel suspension that enables you to soak up the bumps, your car really is an awesome projectile. The tracks are totally out of this world. Banked corners that enable you to 'pull g', undulating bumps that throw your car uncontrollably from side to side and huge ramps that catapult you into mid-air. In fact, you seem to spend so much time airborne, you could almost qualify for a pilot's licence!

Battle it out on the track against other computer controlled rivals, such as, Dare Devil and Road Hog. Race and jump so fast that your car starts to break up under the strain and then accelerate even more. There's no prizes for being second best in this game – it's all or nothing.

Stunt Car Racer – do you think you could be up there with the best?

Stunt Car is utterly brilliant and offers adrenalin-pumping, gut wrenching high speed action that'll keep you engrossed for months. C + VG.

MicroStyle

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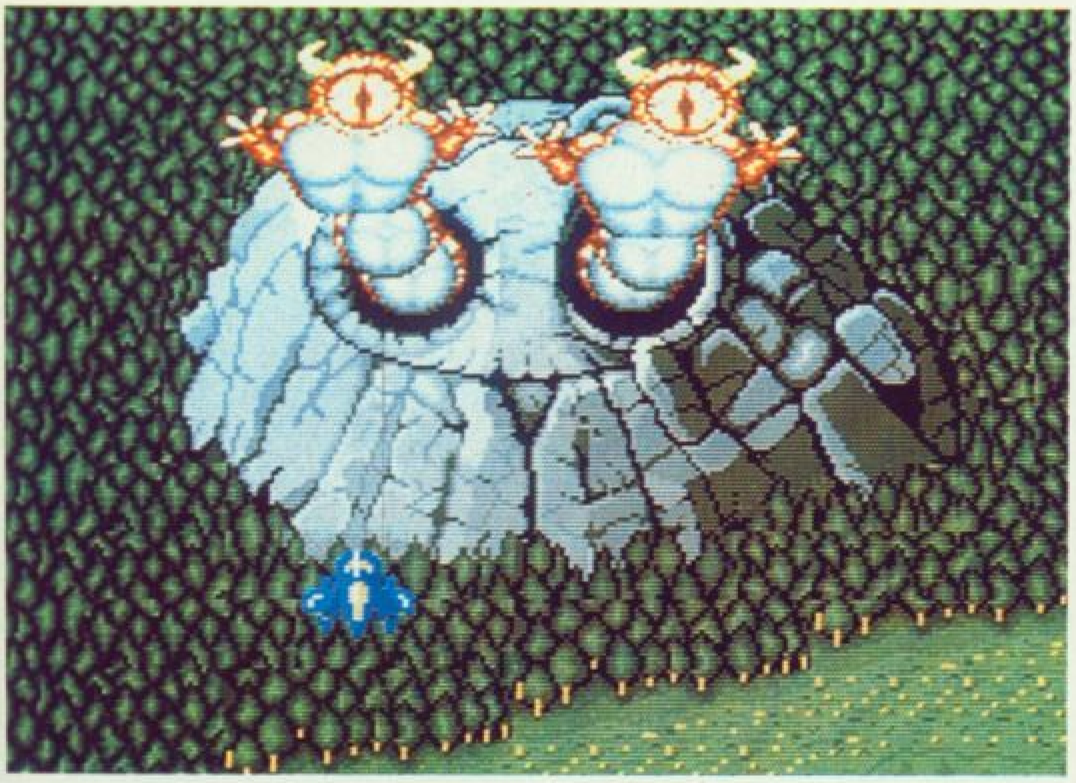

A typical end-of-level nasty. Note that for the bad guys as well as the good guys – two heads are better than one!

GEMINI WING

Double the fun with VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC'S alien blaster...

DIE Mutant Alien Scum' basically sums up the philosophy behind Virgin Mastertronic's latest contender in the shoot-em-up stakes. The alien hordes are a little upset because the SoonDay Spirit (which sounds suspiciously like a certain real Sunday rag) got a little carried away and published a galaxy wide edition carrying the aforementioned headline.

In consequence the proverbial little-green-men have decided to gang up on the inhabitants of the insignificant green and blue planet where all the trouble is coming from (and who can blame them?).

On any other day of the month this would have been... well, a bit of a disaster really, but fortunately for us Earth's good ol' weapon scientists have just put the finishing touches to the Gemini Wing project. This awesome system equips one or two fighters with an array of destructive weaponry ranging from the modest three-way fire ball to the overpowering windscreen wiper of death. Frightening isn't it?

What this all adds up to is yet another excuse for a vertically scrolling, pulp the nasties, collect the nifty add-ons, and give the occasional end-of-level-guardians a nasty headache type affair. Sound familiar? Yes, you've seen it all before, so how does *Gemini Wing* compare to the rest of the shoot-em-up field?

As the title suggests, there is a simultaneous two-player option. This gives you the opportunity to either compete or cooperate with a friend. There are shades of *Blood Money* here, and like Psygnosis' game the pace of *Gemini Wing* does seem to be pitched for simultaneous play. If you're battling on your own you are going to have to work just a little bit harder to make much progress. But then the extra challenge will prevent this game being relegated to the back shelf too quickly.

You are armed with twin lasers, a fairly effective way of dispatching individual creatures, but not much use when you're surrounded by a screen full of malicious meanies with countless missiles homing in on you. Fortunately there are more useful weapons to be had. These come in the form of Gunballs, of which there are ten types, including extra weapons, bonus points, a speed-up and an extra life. The Gunballs can be collected by shooting small clawed creatures or the larger 'Bringers'. These carry a tail of about eight Gunballs. By shooting at the alien you can cause the tail to cycle through the available options.

You can hold up to ten Gunballs at one time. The first three of these appear as a tail behind your fighter craft, while the remaining seven are shown in a little window to the side of the screen. If you are having a particularly bad time you can always steal the other player's Gunballs by flying through his tail, and give him a bad time instead (shame on you).

The first Gunball in the tail is activated by holding down and then releasing fire. It is quite gratifying to release a fire wall just as a whole horde of unsuspecting aliens are shooting down the screen towards you. It can be very frustrating though when you have a juicy spiralling circle of death about fifth in line, and four bonus point Gunballs to get rid of before you can use it.

The graphics are quite nice, and the sprites varied and well-animated, but don't expect any *Xenon II* style parallax scrolling here. What really makes the game is the soundtrack which is neither as bland or as repetitive as standard shoot-em-up sonics. If you already have a reasonable selection of shoot-em-ups in your collection then *Gemini Wing* is not going to give you anything you haven't already got. But having said that if you want something with a simultaneous two-player option and you find *Blood Money* and US Gold's *Forgotten Worlds* a little too tricky, then you should certainly take a look at *Gemini Wing*.

● Laurence Scotford

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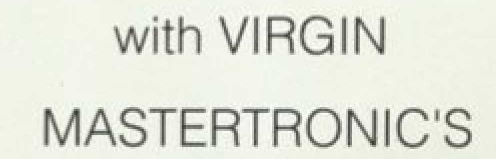
AMIGA VERSION

Nothing to complain about here - smooth scrolling, very nice graphics, and a varied soundtrack that is so good you actually want to keep listening to it rather than turn the volume down. Nothing new, but a very competent effort nonetheless.

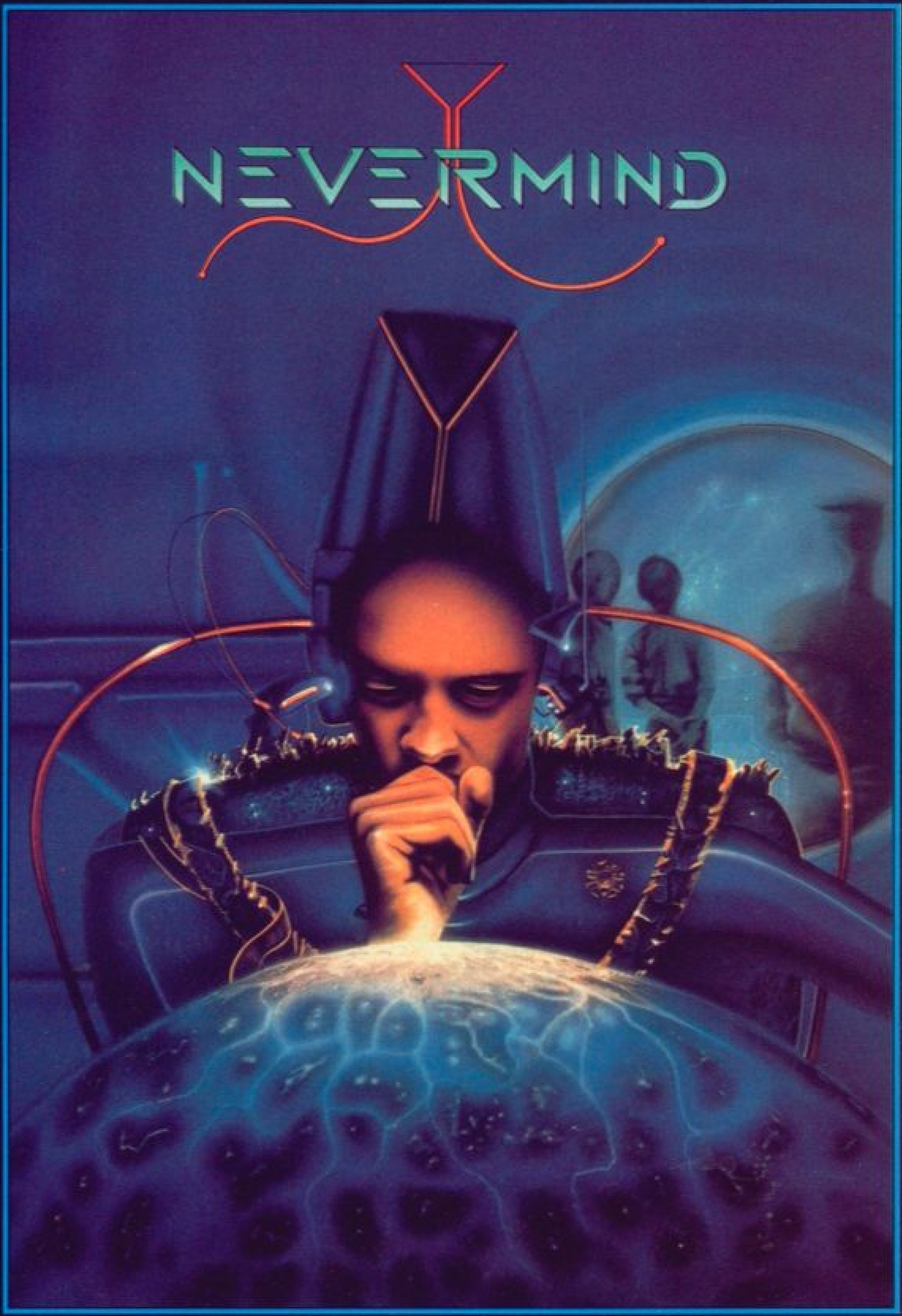
GRAPHICS	**7**	**IQ FACTOR**	**1**
AUDIO	**9**	**FUN FACTOR**	**8**

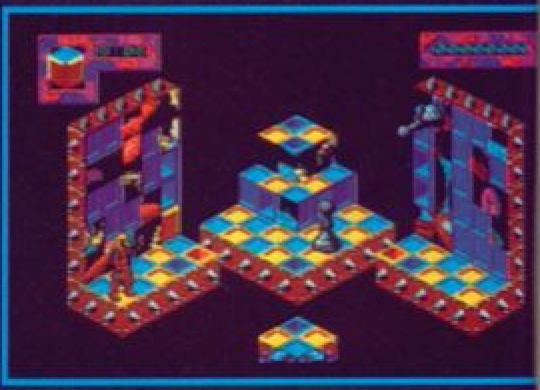
ACE RATING 760

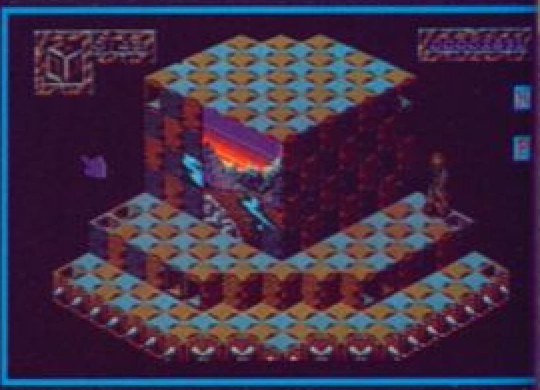
PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE

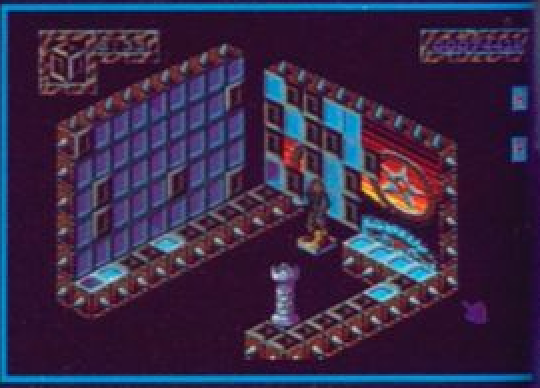


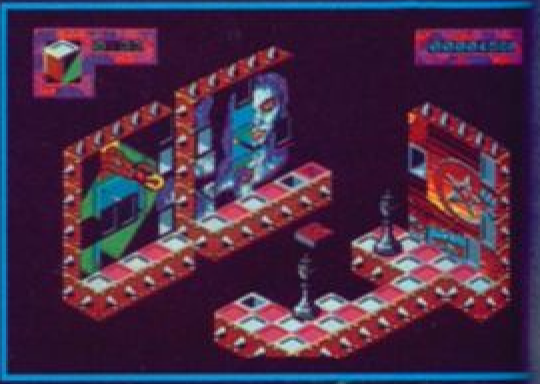
A reasonably entertaining blast - but there's not enough here to hold attention for long...











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Never Mind is a unique combination of arcade action and mind numbing problem solving, and uses a clever blend of computer-generated and hand-crafted puzzles. Is your brain up to the most intriguing challenge of the decade? There's only one way to find out . . .

Screen Shots taken from the Amiga and PC Versions

ATARI ST £19.95 AMIGA £19.95 PC £24.95 051-709 5755

PSYCLAPSE

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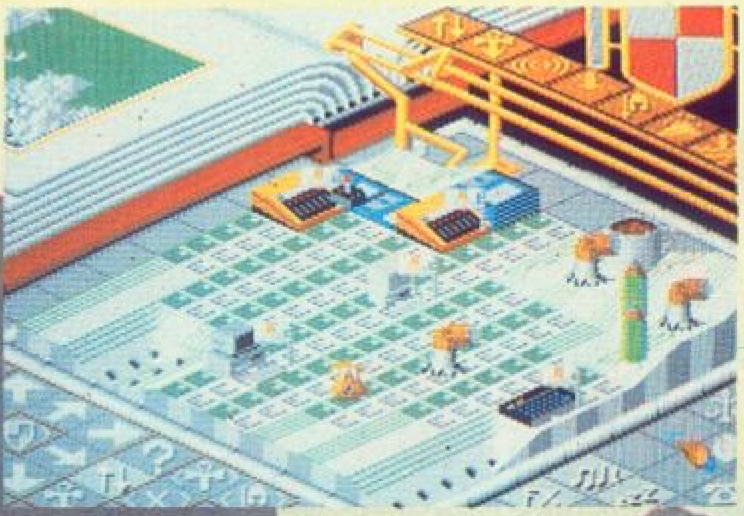
THE PROMISED LANDS

Not exactly a new release this, but certainly something for POPULOUS fans to get all worked up about...Get yourself a shot in the arm with this new scenario disk from ELECTRONIC ARTS.



The Bit Plains resemble a programmer's nightmare. The land is crumpled printer paper, strewn with cigarette butts, coffee mugs, and pencils. The buildings begin as small computers like Sinclair Spectrums and grow up into huge Cray supercomputers. Take a good look at the flags...

WHEN the original game of *Populous* was released earlier this year it scooped a massive ACE rating of 963 as well as numerous other accolades. What made *Populous* the most important games release of 1989 (so far...) was its winning combination of originality, inventive graphics and sound, and superb playability.

The game casts you as a god whose objective is to aid your own people's development and hinder those owing allegiance to a rival deity. This is achieved by raising and lowering the landscape and inflicting various disasters on your enemies like floods, earthquakes and volcanoes.

By now there must be thousands of budding gods out there steadily conquering the hundreds of lands incorporated in the original game. But sooner or later even the slowest omnipotent beings are going to run out of new worlds to conquer: a situation likely to leave many *Populous* addicts suffering from severe withdrawal symptoms. But never fear, help is at hand in the form of *The Promised Lands*.

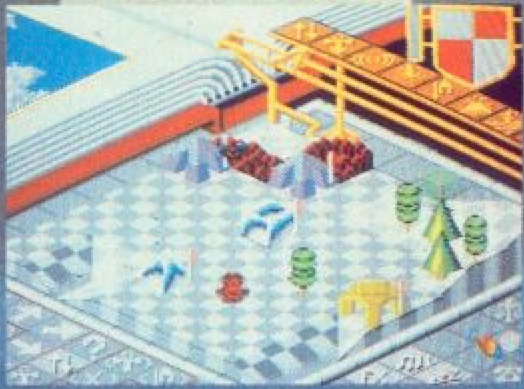
This latest release from Electronic Arts contains five new landscapes to revitalise those apprentice Olympians desperate for another fix of quakes, volcanoes, and floods. The original game is loaded as normal, and then the new data disk is inserted once the game has begun. The landscapes that are played are the same as those in the original game, beginning with GENESIS and working through to KI..... (that would be telling!). But the scenarios Grass Worlds, Ice Worlds, Fire Worlds, and Desert Worlds have been replaced by five completely new world types to play on (or should that be prey on?). These are Revolution Francaise, Silly Land, Wild West, Block Land, and the Bit Plains.

Each of the new scenarios features new graphics for the land, water, people, and buildings, all of which are novel to say the least. So even though the initial shapes of the landscapes are the same they have a completely different appearance, and this cosmetic change alone goes a long way towards revitalising the game's interest.

The Promised Lands delivers more than different graphics though. You will notice that all of the lands are a lot harder to conquer, and even on GENESIS the opposition seem to multiply at an alarming rate. So don't expect to find that just because you've already played the game you can easily overcome lands you are familiar with; it's a whole new challenge.

The Promised Lands is a little expensive for what amounts to a face lift for the original game, but it is still worth a look if you have exhausted the possibilities of the first set of landscapes but still enjoy playing *Populous*.

● Laurence Scotford



Silly Land is an excuse for some 'cute' graphics; your little humanoids are replaced by grinning red and green monsters who build extremely weird houses.

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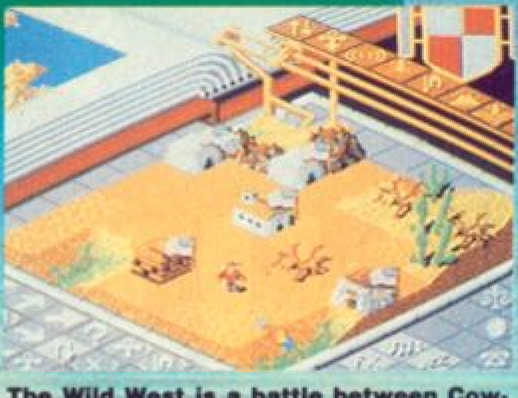
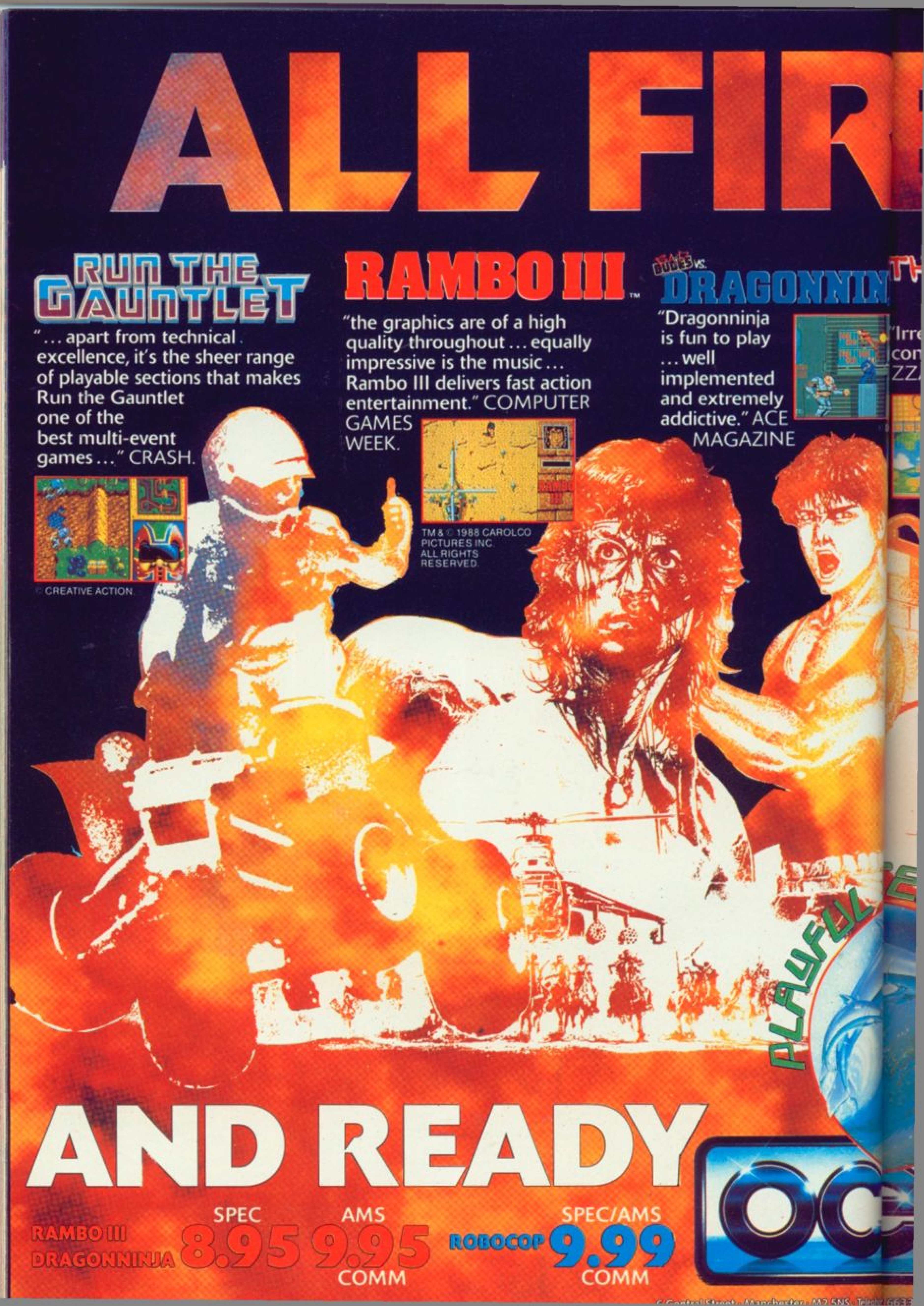
AMIGA	£9.99dk	OUT NOW
Dual Format disk - works on both machines.		



The Wild West is a battle between Cowboys 'n' Injuns. They seems to have got their wires a bit crossed though as both sides begin the game in wigwams and end up in forts!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"the graphics are of a high quality throughout ... equally impressive is the music... Rambo III delivers fast action entertainment." COMPUTER GAMES WEEK.

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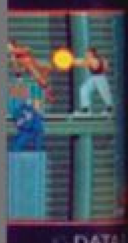

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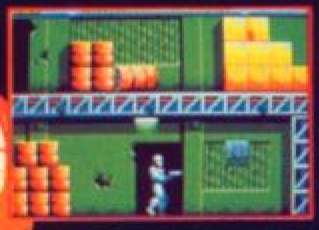

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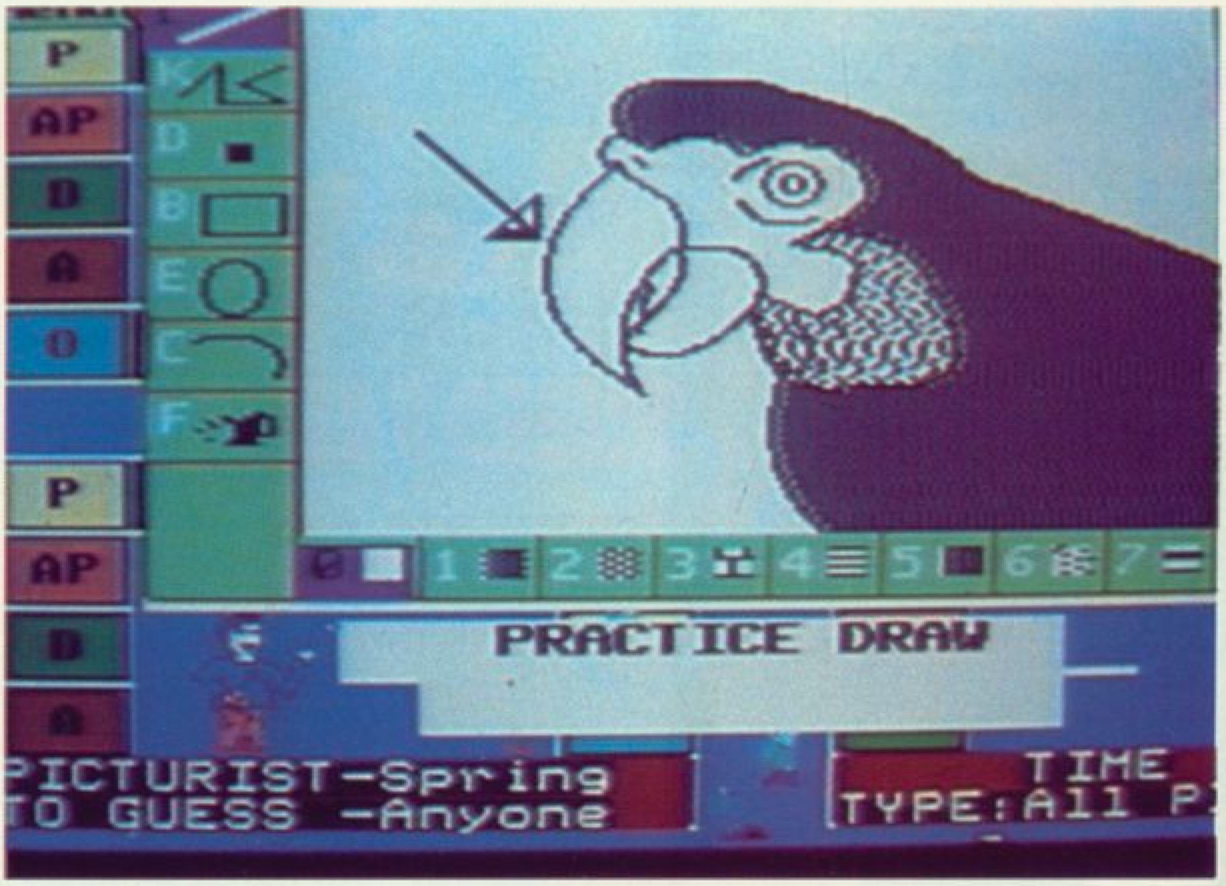
PICTIONARY

DOMARK go doodling in a game with a built-in paint package that could challenge *Trivial Pursuit*



Pictionary – not just a pretty Polly?

AS a boardgame, Pictionary is quickly catching up with Trivial Pursuit in the Yuppie After Dinner game stakes. So it seems almost logical to release *Pictionary* the computer game as a follow-up to the most successful computer trivia game in the world.

Pictionary is, in easy terms, a cross between Snakes and Ladders without any snakes or ladders and Charades. The way the game works is like this. The computer draws a picture (or a human player does if you're playing with two teams or more) and you have to guess what word the drawing is trying to identify before you run out of time.

There is an option to 'hit the buzzer' while the picture is being drawn, but that might forfeit you a move. For example, the computer draws a hand and a section of the forearm. Player one buzzes in at this point and shouts out 'Hand'. Player two is much more intelligent. He sits back and waits for the drawing to be finished. Sure enough, the computer then draws an arrow pointing to the join between the hand and the forearm. The word is 'wrist'.

To win the game, you have to go all the way round the board and land on the End square first. By correctly guessing a Pictionary (by telling the computer you got it right, just as in *Trivial Pursuit*) the computer throws a dice and moves you along that number of squares. This reliance on honesty was one of the main objections to the computerised *Trivial Pursuit*, so it's a pity that it's still here in this later release.

There are plenty of game options, including a large array of different player formations. You can play one, two, three or four players, where the computer draws all the pictures, or you can play two, three or four teams, where one member of each team has to draw the picture prompted by the computer.

The highlight of the game, and the most integral part of the program is the art package you have to use to doodle. Surprisingly enough, it's very good. Very easy to use, it's designed to be 'instant'. Everything you need is right in front of you. No sub menus, no hunting for the right tool. Even if you're not a dab hand with art packages, a few minutes on the Practice Draw option will have you putting down Mona Lisas (or Metallica logos, depending on taste) all over the shop.

After playing it for quite a while, both against a human opponent and against the computer, the most surprising thing I've found is just how imaginative it is. The computer drawings are both recognisable and varied, and sitting down and watching it draw is like having your very own episode of Catchphrase, minus the annoying Irish bloke.

A lot more fun than *Trivial Pursuit* was, and what's more you don't need to know everything about everything to play it.

● Tony Dillon

AMIGA VERSION

Loads of colour, lots of varied pictures make the game visually interesting. Fun for two, but could get very dull playing solo. Nice three channel tune in the classical mould plays throughout.

GRAPHICS	**8**	**IQ FACTOR**	**7**
AUDIO	**6**	**FUN FACTOR**	**7**

ACE RATING 790

RELEASE BOX

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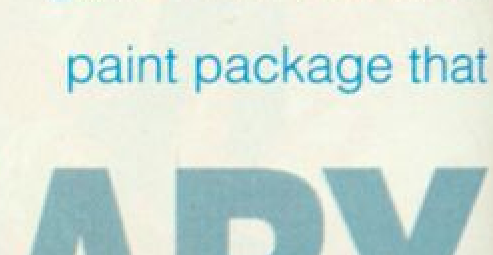
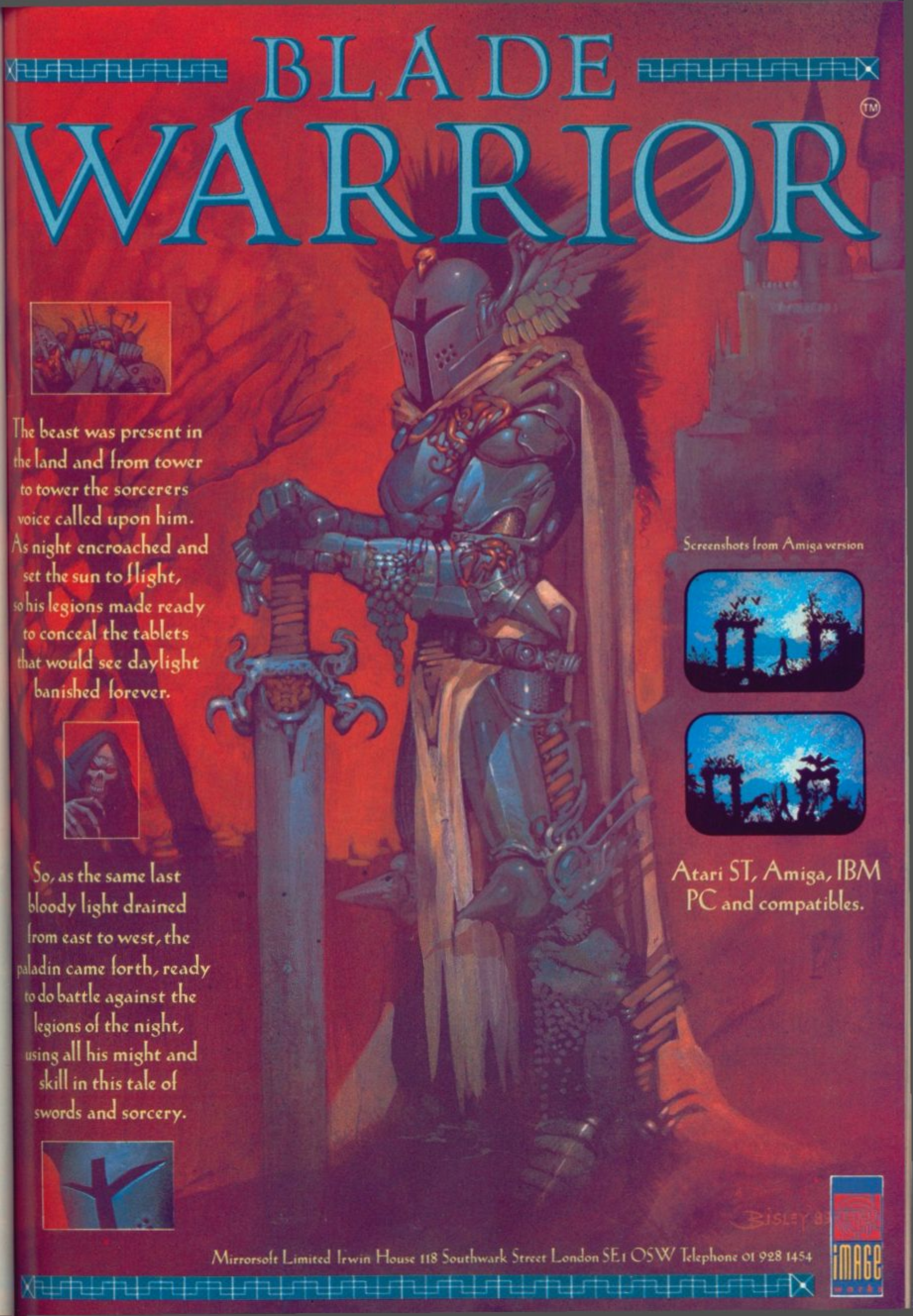


Sheer variety keeps you going, but even that palls in the end...



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The beast was present in the land and from tower to tower the sorcerers voice called upon him. As night encroached and set the sun to flight, so his legions made ready to conceal the tablets that would see daylight banished forever.

So, as the same last bloody light drained from east to west, the paladin came forth, ready to do battle against the legions of the night, using all his might and skill in this tale of swords and sorcery.

Screenshots from Amiga version

Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC and compatibles.

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ACE AND PSYGNOSIS OFFER YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO SNAP UP SOME OF THE LATEST AND GREATEST GAMES FOR THE ST AND AMIGA.

COMPETITION

GAMES UP FOR GRABS

Get your grubby mitts on some great goodies from the guys at Psygnosis, and have a go at their recent gorgeous games.

If you read our feature on Liverpool based Psygnosis in the September issue you will know that the company is currently producing a whole host of amazing games for 16-bit machines.

The most recent release was the amazing *Shadow of the Beast* for the Amiga, reviewed in October. We were very impressed: graphically, the game pushes the machine further than anything seen before. But *Beast* is by no means the first Psygnosis release to astound press and public alike.

Ever since the launch of its first mega-game, Brattacas, Psygnosis have built a reputation for excellence in 16-bit games and are particularly renowned for their quality graphics and sound.

With titles like *Barbarian, Baal,* and *Menace* already to their credit, Psygnosis are now set to release even more stunning games in the run up to Christmas, and we're giving you the chance to have six of them absolutely free.

The first five correct entries out of the editorial hat will receive copies of *Triad, Blood Money, Never Mind, Infestation, Matrix Marauders,* and *Stryx*. In addition Psygnosis are throwing in a Psygnosis T-Shirt and a Beast T-Shirt featuring the brilliant Roger Dean artwork.

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS...

...read the six game descriptions below and decide which game matches which description. For instance, if you think that description 1 matches game A, your answer would be 1.A.

Mark your answers on the back of a postcard together with your name, address, and telephone number, and whether you would prefer to receive ST or Amiga versions of the games. Send your completed postcard to:

ACE PSYGNOSIS COMP,
30-32 FARRINGDON LANE,
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1. This fascinating isometric 3D game of strategy and quick thinking has you rearranging tiles to form pictures. Not as easy as it sounds when you have to contend with giant chess pieces, never mind the disappearing tiles and moving causeways...
2. As intergalactic agent Kal Solar, can you clear the infested space base of alien eggs and activate the nuclear power source before time runs out and the galaxy is overrun?
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4. Three for the price of one in this mega value games compilation.
5. If cash is short, why not go on an Alien Safari and earn some extra dosh for bagging the baddies?
6. The cyborgs have run amok and the dome central committee are in hysteryx. Only the top secret project alpha can save the day!

A. TRIAD
B. INFESTATION
C. BLOOD MONEY
D. STRYX
E. MATRIX MARAUDERS
F. NEVER MIND

Rules

1. The closing date for entries is November 2nd 1989.
2. Employees of EMAP or Psygnosis are not eligible for entry.
3. The editors decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.

20 QUESTIONS

YOUR CHANCE TO CHANGE THE WORLD AND WIN FREE SOFTWARE

We're looking for vital information about ACE readers. Your answers could win you £50 worth of free software for your machine and help us to bring you a better magazine...

ACE is growing bigger every day, but without you we wouldn't be going anywhere. Our main commitment is to provide our readers with exactly the magazine they're looking for and you can help us by ticking the boxes below and posting the form (a photocopy would be fine) to **20 Questions, ACE, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.**

And by way of saying thank you, we've got £50 worth of free software to hand out to each of the readers whose forms we pick at random from those received prior to November 10th 1989. So get your form in pronto!

1) Are you Male ☐ Female ☐

2) How old are you?

Under 12	☐	21-25	☐
12-16	☐	26-30	☐
17-18	☐	Over 30	☐
19-20	☐		

3) Are you:
A student ☐ In full-time employment ☐
In part-time employment ☐
None of the above ☐

4) Is your annual income:
Below £5K ☐ £7.5K-10K ☐
£5K-7.5K ☐ £10K-15K ☐
Over £15K ☐

5) Which of the following computers, if any, do you own or are likely to buy within the next 12 months.

	Own (don't use much)	Own (use regularly)	Planning to buy
Amiga	☐	☐	☐
C 64	☐	☐	☐
Apple MaC	☐	☐	☐
Spectrum	☐	☐	☐
Amstrad CPC	☐	☐	☐
Atari 800	☐	☐	☐
Atari VCS	☐	☐	☐
Amstrad PCW	☐	☐	☐
PC Compatible	☐	☐	☐
Nintendo	☐	☐	☐
Sega	☐	☐	☐
Atari ST	☐	☐	☐
Other: (please specify)			
....	☐	☐	☐

6) Which of the following items do you own or are planning to buy?

	Own	Planning to buy
Modem	☐	☐
Printer	☐	☐
MIDI interface	☐	☐
Video camera	☐	☐
Audio CD player	☐	☐
Video recorder	☐	☐
Record deck	☐	☐
35mm SLR camera	☐	☐
Car	☐	☐
Motorcycle	☐	☐

7) How many of these types of programs do you own?

	None	Under 5	5-10	More than 10
Simulation games	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arcade games	☐	☐	☐	☐
Strategy games	☐	☐	☐	☐
Adventure games	☐	☐	☐	☐
War games	☐	☐	☐	☐
Role playing games	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paint program	☐	☐	☐	☐
Music program	☐	☐	☐	☐

8) Do you buy usually buy your software from:
WH Smith ☐ Boots ☐ Menzies ☐
Local Computer Shop ☐ Woolworths ☐
Newsagents ☐ Mail Order ☐

9) How much money do you spend on software each month?
Under £15 ☐ £15-25 ☐ £25-35 ☐
More than £35 ☐ More than £50 ☐

10) How many other people have read or looked at this copy of ACE?

None ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐
More than 4 ☐

11) Which of these other magazines do you read?

	Never	Occasionally	Often
Computer and Video Games	☐	☐	☐
Zzap 64	☐	☐	☐
Omni	☐	☐	☐
Popular Computing Weekly	☐	☐	☐
Commodore User	☐	☐	☐
Your Sinclair	☐	☐	☐
Crash	☐	☐	☐
The One	☐	☐	☐
Amstrad Action	☐	☐	☐
New Computer Express	☐	☐	☐
The Games Machine	☐	☐	☐
New Scientist	☐	☐	☐
Amiga Format	☐	☐	☐
ST Format	☐	☐	☐
ST Action	☐	☐	☐

12) Rate the following articles/sections in this issue between 0 (not at all interesting) and 10 (very interesting)

News .... ☐
Letters .... ☐
Previews (pp 18/19) .... ☐
Arcades (pp 22/23) .... ☐
PC Engine feature (pp 27/30) ....
David Braben feature (pp35/37).............. ☐
Horror feature (pp 41/44) .... ☐
Screen Test (pp47/80)........................... ☐
Competition (p 85)................................ ☐
16-bit Racing game feature (pp 89-94) .... ☐
Updates (pp 97/100)............................. ☐
Music (pp 103/104)............................... ☐
Tricks and Tactics (pp 107/110)............. ☐
Beer Money Budget Software
(pp 113/115)... ☐
Adventures (pp 107/110)........................ ☐

13) With regard to game reviews, would you like to see:

	Yes	No
More game reviews	☐	☐
Less game reviews	☐	☐
Fewer game reviews, concentrating on more important releases	☐	☐
Longer game reviews	☐	☐
More console game reviews	☐	☐

14) With regard to the following subjects, would you like to see:

	More coverage	Less coverage	No coverage at all
Hardware	☐	☐	☐
Graphics software	☐	☐	☐
Music and MIDI	☐	☐	☐
Adventures	☐	☐	☐
New technology (not directly computer related, e.g. interactive video)	☐	☐	☐
News features	☐	☐	☐
ACE on the Road	☐	☐	☐

15)Which ITV region are you in (e.g. HTV, Anglia, Thames...)?

....

16) Do you own a Filofax compatible personal organiser?

17) How often do you visit the arcades?
Never ☐ Occasionally ☐ Often ☐

18) Apart from computer games, how much do you indulge in:

	Never	Occasionally	Often
Sport	☐	☐	☐
Reading	☐	☐	☐
Cinema	☐	☐	☐
TV	☐	☐	☐
Overseas travel	☐	☐	☐

19) Fill in the following information for the prize draw for £50 of free software:

My name and address:

20) If I win, I would like my software prize to be compatible with the

.... computer.

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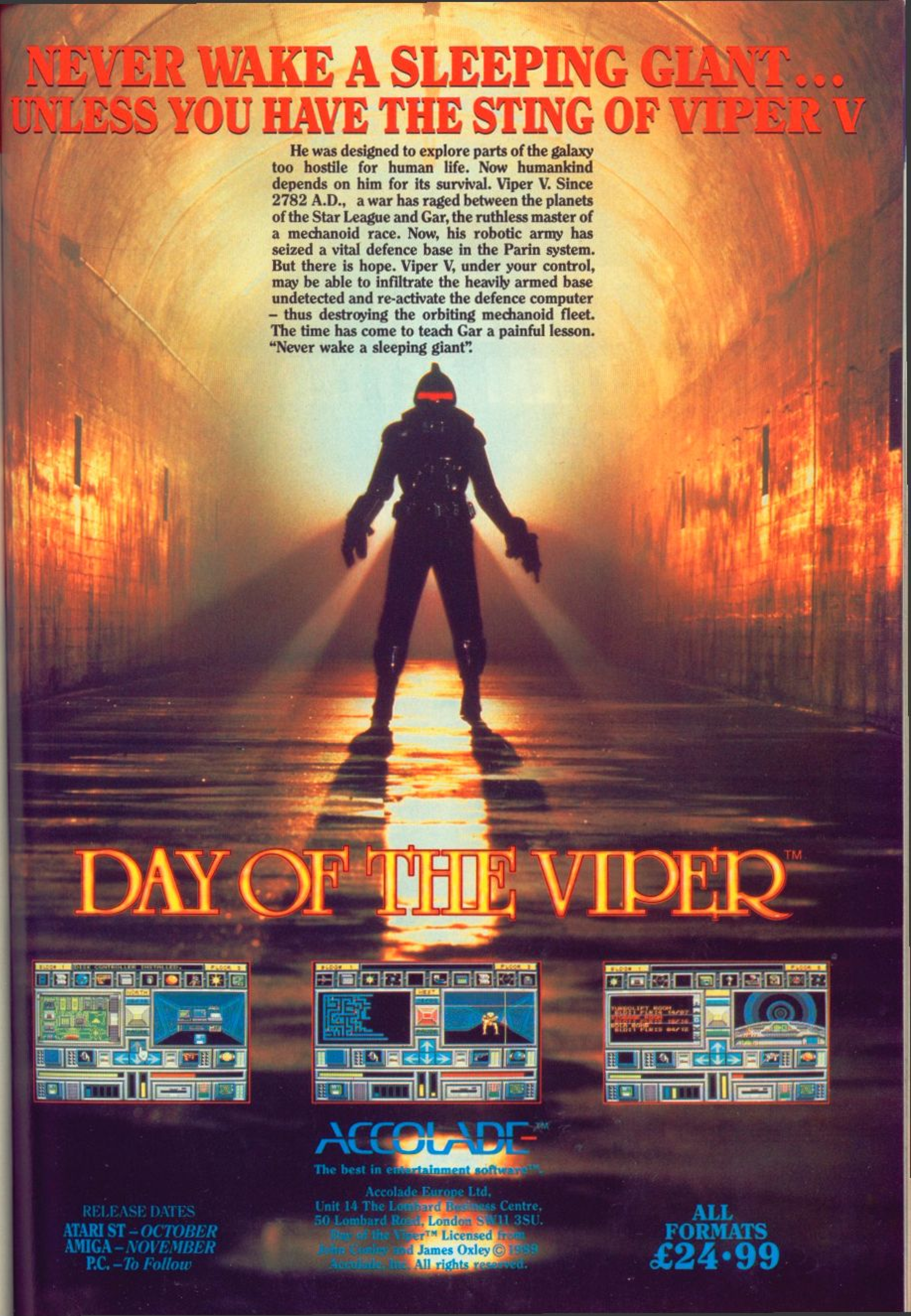

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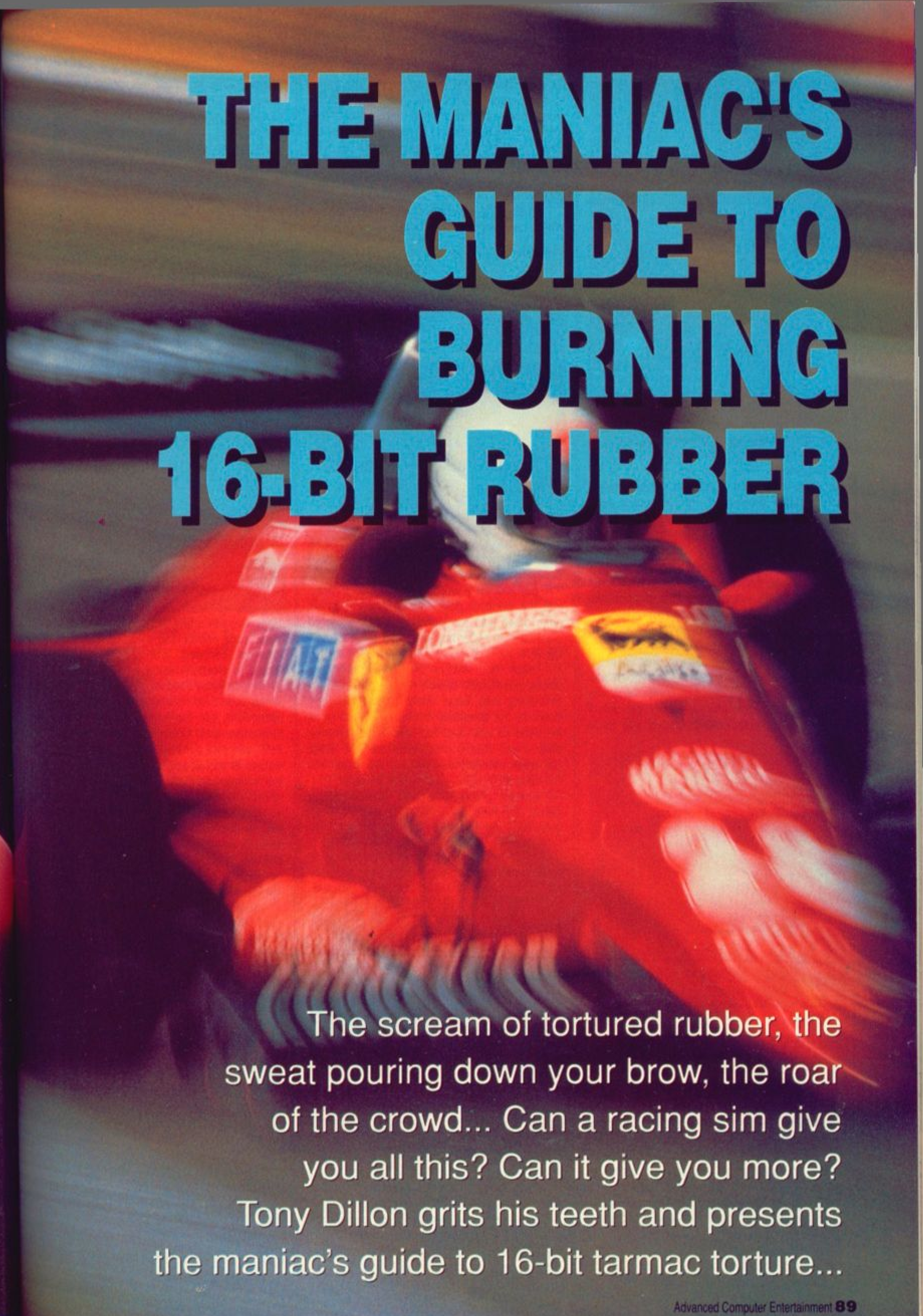

THE MANIAC'S GUIDE TO BURNING 16-BIT RUBBER

The scream of tortured rubber, the sweat pouring down your brow, the roar of the crowd... Can a racing sim give you all this? Can it give you more? Tony Dillon grits his teeth and presents the maniac's guide to 16-bit tarmac torture...

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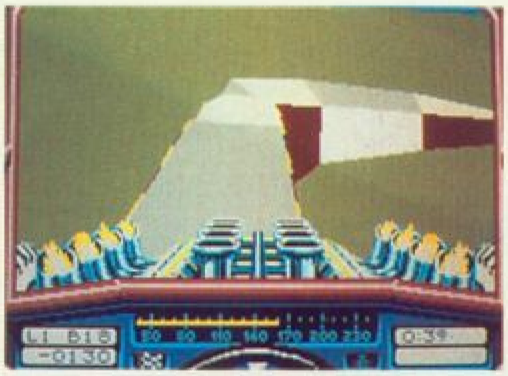
TIO PEPE
TIO PEPE

Driving games have always been popular, ever since the days when Atari's Pole Position first hit the streets, and gave the average man in the street a chance to try out every boy's fantasy. One or two enhancements have been made in the years since, however, and in comparison to today's arcade titles (Powerdrift, for example), Pole Position looks almost prehistoric. Even so, a landmark it was, one which led the way to one of the most popular forms of computer entertainment. But which one of its successors should you go for?

This month sees the appearance of two new additions to the computer racing family – Vette and Continental Circus. Vette arrived at ACE just too late to make it into this article, but you can check it out in Screen Test (see the Screen Test index on page 4 for its location). Before you check out the new contenders, why not drive off down memory lane and see if there are any second-hand models you could go for...



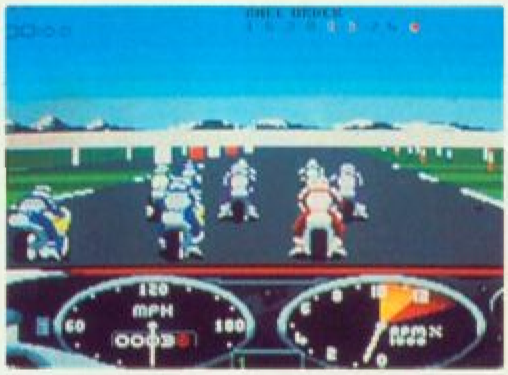
Stunt Car Racer

Microprose

After a lightning qualifying lap, Stunt Car takes up lead position on the starting grid and at the same time places itself in the annals of computer history as being one of the most amazing spectacles to watch, let alone play. The opponents are your good self and a computer pacer. The objective: do X number of laps on a track with the eventual aim of beating the computer. The track: a continuous loop of tarmac.

The strange thing is that the track is raised, at its lowest point some 25 feet from the ground, and all the tracks are full of treacherously steep climbs and dips. At high speeds, it's more than a little easy to fall off. The game is first-person perspective, with the outside world made up of really fast smooth filled vectors, and the impression of realism is unbelievable. Your stomach actually churns as you shoot off the edge of a jump into thin air, before plummeting earthward, hopefully onto another piece of track.

An amazing experience, and a clear winner. Where can things go from here?



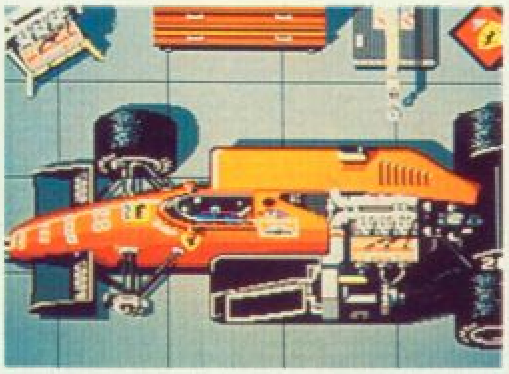
R.V.F.

Microprose

More Microprose racing, only this time it's on a bike. The champion in the Best Sprite Based Racing Game stakes, and a superb simulation, RVF put you, as a worthless little motor racer, into the world of performance bike racing on none other than the Honda RVF750, a limited build custom racer based around the best selling VFR750.

Detail was always one of Microprose's strong points, and there's no lack of it in RVF. Everything has been finely calculated, right down to the animation of the rider who turns his head to look over his shoulder at passing bikers, and after a crash runs the bike along the track before mounting and riding off into the sunset.

Brilliant graphics, brilliant sound, brilliant game.

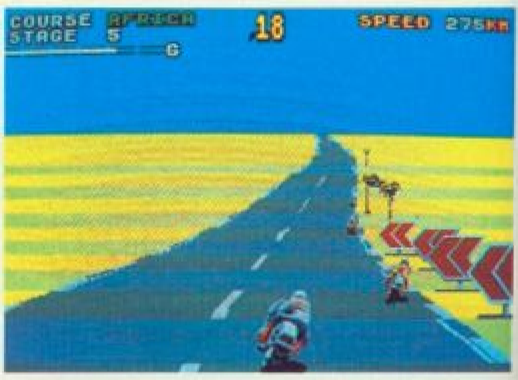


Ferrari Formula One

Electronic Arts

A bit old this one, but still a game that was way ahead of its time to start with. Take the mouse in your hand and take the wheel of a Formula One Ferrari racer on some of the most famous racecourses in the world. It's all there, from qualifying laps and trophies, right down to wind-tunnels, where you can alter various settings on your car to improve the performance.

FF1 is noted for its unusual steering mechanism. Rather than use the mouse to turn the steering wheel, you actually used the mouse to turn the driver's head, and the wheel would turn in kind. The more you turned your head, the more the wheel turned. The practicality of this meant that you could turn to look round a bend as you were turning it, giving you warning of any cars ahead and generally making the game more realistic. The sensitivity of the control made the car very hard to drive, but once you were used to it, you wondered why nobody else ever copied it. A true thoroughbred.

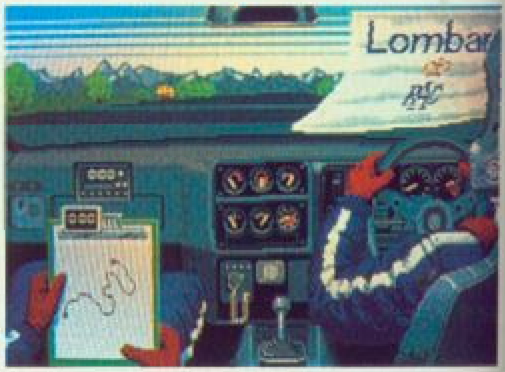


Super Hang On

Activision

Not so much a simulation as a perfect arcade conversion. Super Hang On was essentially Hang On with a few extra frills. For a start you could race one of four courses, each set in a different continent and ranging from Africa (Easy) to North America (Very Hard). Another great gameplay feature was the Nitro button. When your bike reached 280 KPH, you could inject Nitro into the engines to give the bike a little more kick, boosting it up to around 340 KPH, which is a stupid speed to try and take a corner at and usually results in people running out of road and flying A over T into the nearby grass.

The screen update, of both the road and the sprites, is perfect. The road itself is as smooth as the ACE Ad Manager on a date, and the hills are realistic enough to make you try and look over the crest of them. Great game, excellent conversion.



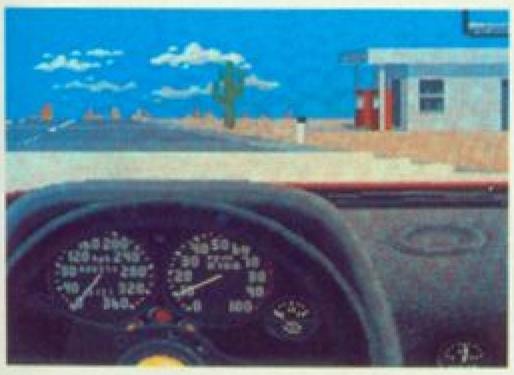
Lombard RAC Rally

Mandarin

Slip into the luxurious surroundings of a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth, and take part in what may not be a major racing event, but is still fun none the less.

Race through many types of terrain, such as mountain or forest, and through many types of weather condition, such as fog or night. As you race the qualifying rallies, you can earn yourself money to improve your car, through either just finishing the course quickly or by making a TV appearance, where you are quizzed on the history of Rallying, as supplied with the game.

As you race, you take the unusual position of sitting behind yourself in the car, in which position you can clearly see the road ahead through the windscreen, as well as all the little driving movements you make, such as turning the wheel or changing gears. All this goes toward giving the game a nice atmosphere, and though the variety of gameplay may be a little low, it's still a game I'll be playing for a good while yet.

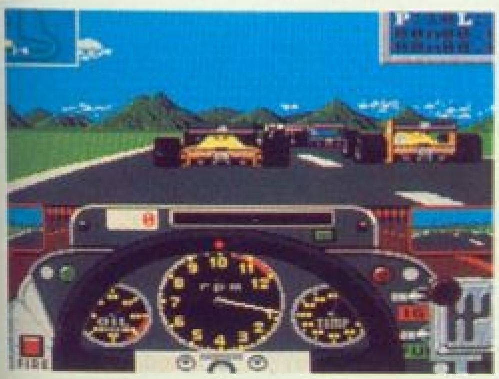


The Duel - Test Drive II

Accolade

Accolade tried to right all the Test Drive wrongs with The Duel, and to an extent they succeeded. Still keeping with the theme of illegal high speed performance car driving, either a Porsche 959 or a Ferrari F40, this time they added a bit more of a game to it rather than pointless A to B as fast as possible. This time you're in a race, either against the clock or a computer controlled driver, and you have to race first over leisurely flatland, then up into the treacherous mountain roads and then down again on the other side, all the time avoiding the general public and trying to stay ahead of the computer driver.

There's nothing serious about the game. It's just a lot of fun. It doesn't claim to be technically or visually accurate, but why should it? Also, fight those boredom blues with the Supercars expansion disk, which gives you another five cars to play around with, and the California Challenge disk, which gives you a hair raising ride from the suburbs of California to the tip of Mexico.

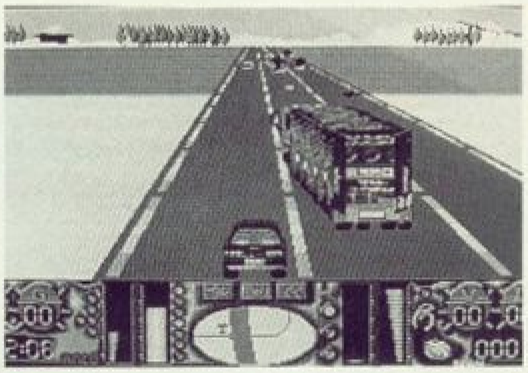


Grand Prix Circuit

Accolade

Very similar to the Test Drive series both in look and feel, GPC let you compete in a Formula One Championship with a car of your choice. Though not as technically brilliant as Ferrari Formula One, it is, as with Test Drive, great fun to play.

Graphics are quite limited, but what is there is well used. The other cars are very detailed and the update is surprisingly smooth. The lack of roadside objects is a bit surprising, but I don't think this was ever meant to be taken seriously anyway. As before, it's fun.



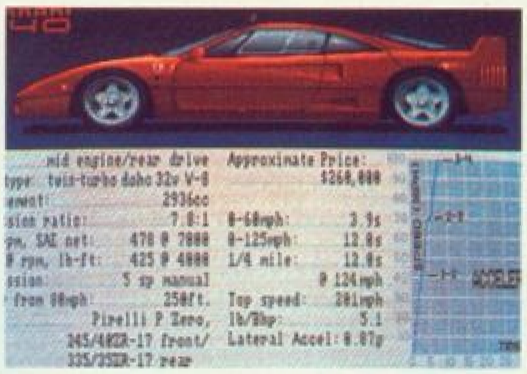
Highway Hawks

ANCO

HH is, in no uncertain terms, a clone of arcade favourite Road Blasters. It's just sad that it happened to be much better than the official conversion.

Steer your battlematic Ford Cortina at stupid speeds down stretches of motorway deemed as `dangerous'. As you race along over land and sometimes over sea, you meet various other vehicles. Trucks, when shot, can drop weapons and supplies, or just a hinderance or two. Other cars may drop fuel for you, or they may shoot at you. Whatever the case, all it takes is a quick squeeze of the trigger on your part and that's the last of them.

The road is incredibly smooth, as is all the in-game animation. Control response is fast and the action is well placed. This is how Roadblasters should have been.



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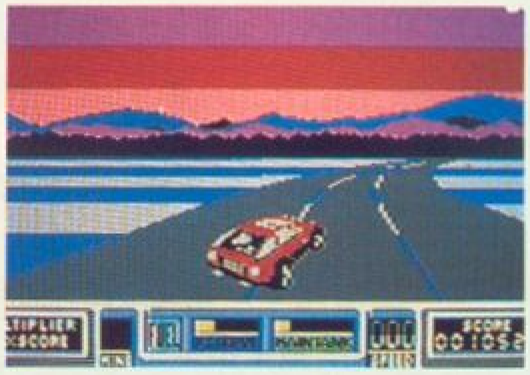
pm, SAE net:   478 @ 7000    0-125mph:      12.8s
@ rpm, lb-ft:  425 @ 4000    1/4 mile:      12.0s
ssion:         5 sp manual                @ 124mph
 from 60mph:        250ft.   Top speed:    201mph
          Pirelli P Zero,    lb/Bhp:          5.1
       245/40ZR-17 front/    Lateral Accel: 0.87g
       335/35ZR-17 rear
```

Test Drive

Accolade

The original performance car game. Select one of five supercharged sports cars, and take them for a leisurely spin around a winding mountain road. Avoid the police wherever possible and try not to hit other cars or fall off the road.

Great upon release, but looks a bit dated now. The screen update is appalling, which leads to almost no sensation of true speed, and the basic problem is that it's just too easy. That linked with the lack of variety makes the game short lived. Innovative though.

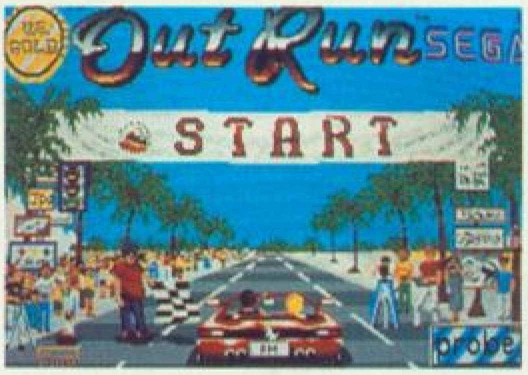


Roadblasters

US Gold

The logical follow up to Out Run in the arcade, and sponsored by toy giants Matchbox, Roadblasters had the same Behind-The-Car view as Out Run, only this time gave you a gun, so instead of avoiding the bad guys, you now got to take them out in a really satisfying way.

Sadly, 16 Bit Roadblasters almost totally fails to capture the spirit of the coin-op. It's slow, unplayable and generally a terrible conversion. A turkey.



Out Run

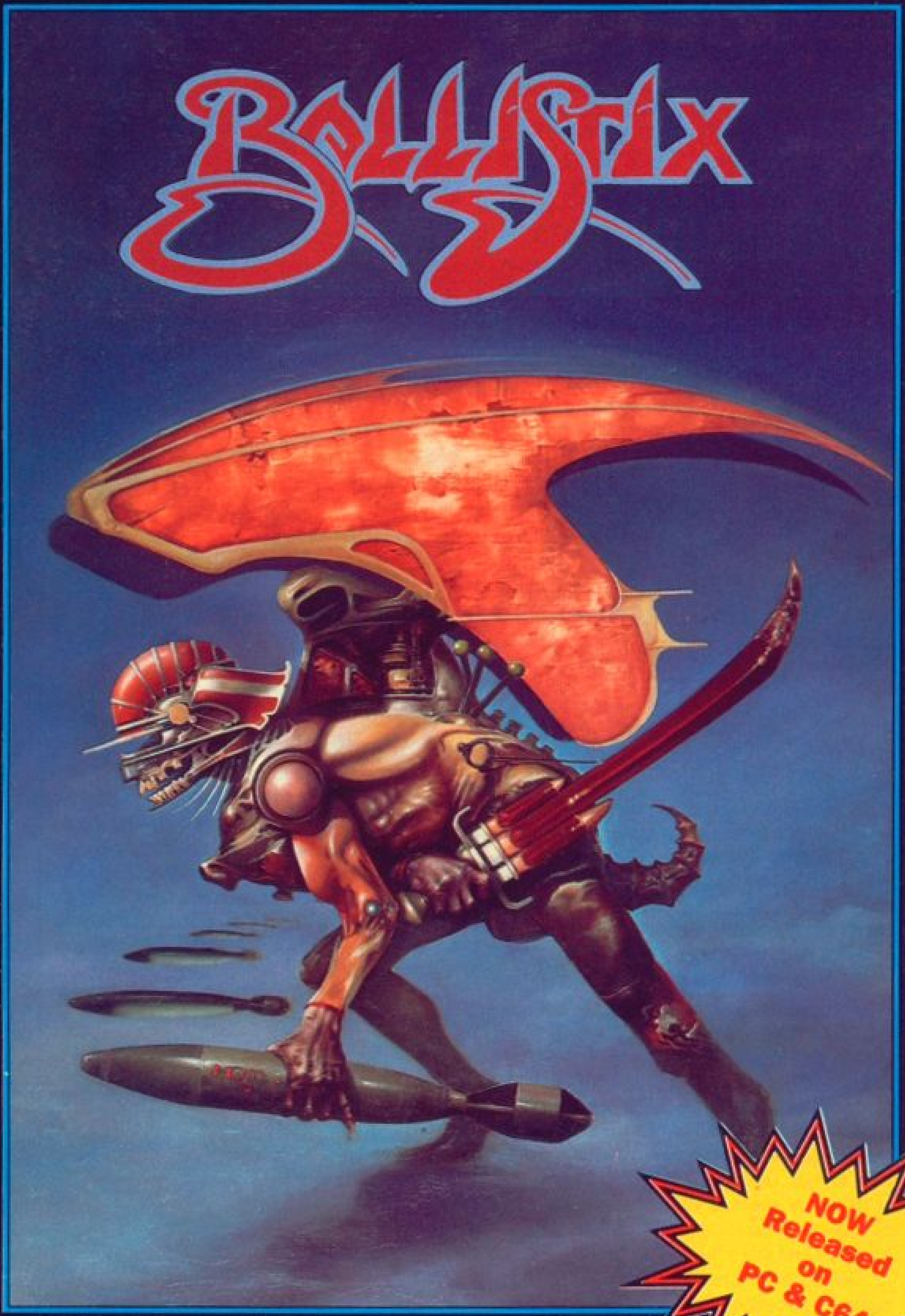
US Gold

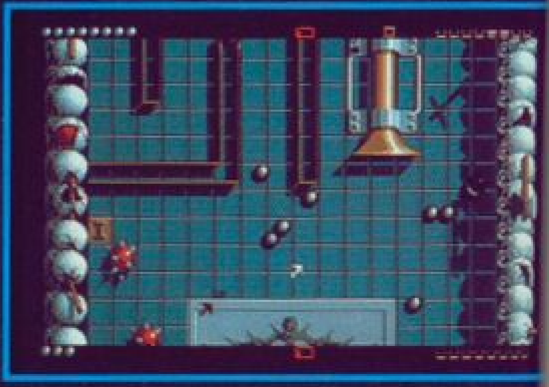
Now this is a major turkey. The original arcade driving game, and also one of the biggest selling games of all time. Also one of the most disappointing conversions of all time. Almost unrecognisable from the coin op, the graphics are all garishly coloured and disgustingly blocky. The road update is so terrible there are times where you can't tell if the road is bending left or right and the sound is terrible.

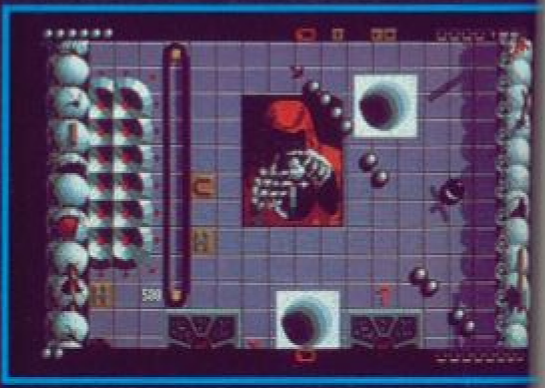
One of the biggest foul-ups of all time.

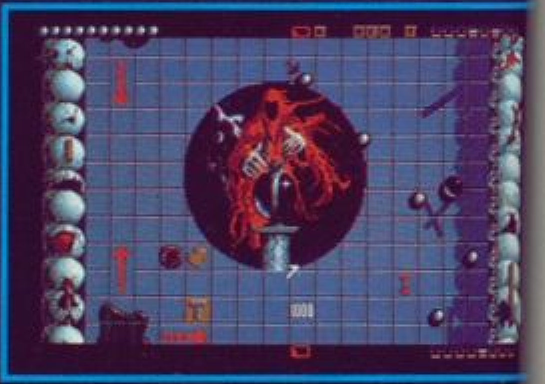
Late starters.

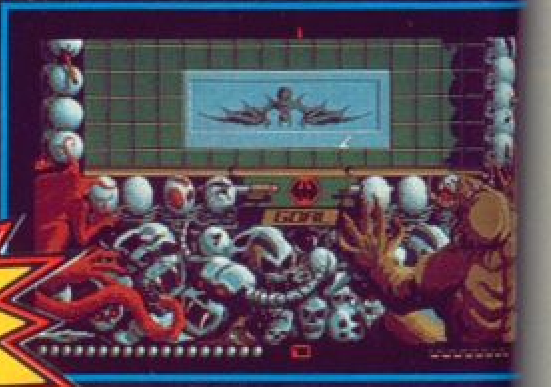
And that's only the start. Soon to come are the conversions of Chase HQ and W.E.C. Le Mans from Ocean, filled vector arcade classic Hard Drivin' from Domark, Outrun Europa from US Gold and Powerdrift from Activision. Watch this space.











NOW Released on PC & C64

BALLISTIX

It's a whole new ball game!

Sick of silly old soccer? Tired of pathetic pinball? Then you need a dose of *Ballistix* – the fastest, wackiest, toughest ball game yet to appear on a computer. *Ballistix* just explodes with excitement, puzzles and an amazing **130 different screens** of frenetic action, on the PC, Atari ST and Amiga. On the C64 version there are **64 screens**.

The aim of the game is simple; score more goals than your opponent to win the match. Doing it is a different matter as **splitters** fill the screen with dozens of balls, **tunnels** hide them from view, **bumpers** bounce balls all over the show, fiendish **red arrows** speed them up to almost impossible velocity, **magnets** pull them away from your control, and much, much more.

Ballistix is incredibly flexible, too. You can play against the computer or another player, set the speed if you can't stand the pace, define where the balls are fired and their velocity, rack up bonuses that will get you extra goals and then, at the end of an exhausting game, set your name in pride of place on the high-score table. And it's all played to the accompaniment of a throbbing sound-track and a crowd that applauds your every goal.

Ballistix is definitely not a game for wimps. It's tough, fast, challenging and incredibly competitive - in fact, it's just the kind of game you like.

AMIGA/ATARI ST £19.95 PC £24.95 C64 DISK £12.99/CASS. £9.99

Screen Shots taken from the Amiga version

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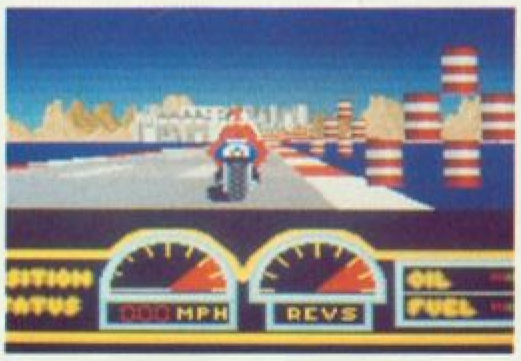
PSYCLAPSE

UNCOOL CONTROL?

Joysticks just don't cut the mustard when it comes to racing sims – find out why, and what could replace them...

Remember the first time you sat in an original Outrun machine? Remember the realistic way the car responded to the slightest turn of the wheel? Remember pulling the wheel hard over to skid round one bend and then gently slipping round the next? Try doing the same thing with any of the computer conversions... You can't! And why not? Because compared to the the sophisticated controls on the arcade machine your computer's joystick looks like a Robin Reliant next to a Porsche.

Ever since Atari established the standard protocol for joysticks on its consoles way back in the 70s, computer gamers have had to put up with a control that is about as sophisticated as a light switch. The problem is that the majority of computer joysticks are digital. They really only amount to five switches — four for the directions, up, down, left, and right, and one for the fire button. The advantage of this system is that, not only are the joysticks cheap and easy to produce, it is also easy for the computer to read and use the signals generated by them.



SITION
TATUS
MPH
REVS
OIL
FUEL

***Bikers* - Jez San's Konix game, to be bundled with the machine, makes good use of analogue control - the feel as you lean into the bends is far more realistic than it could be with a simple on/off digital joystick.**

Digital joysticks are fine for platform games or shoot-em-ups, but what happens when you want to simulate a lap round Brands Hatch or a dogfight between an F-16 and a Mig? For these applications you need more sensitive control than just turn left or turn right, you also want to be able to control the speed of the turn. With a standard digital joystick this is just not possible.

Jez San keeping an eye on one of his competitors' programs, running on the Konix at the launch of the console. Jez' game Bikers (see screenshot elsewhere) was one of the few games to make proper use of the analogue control potential of the Konix.

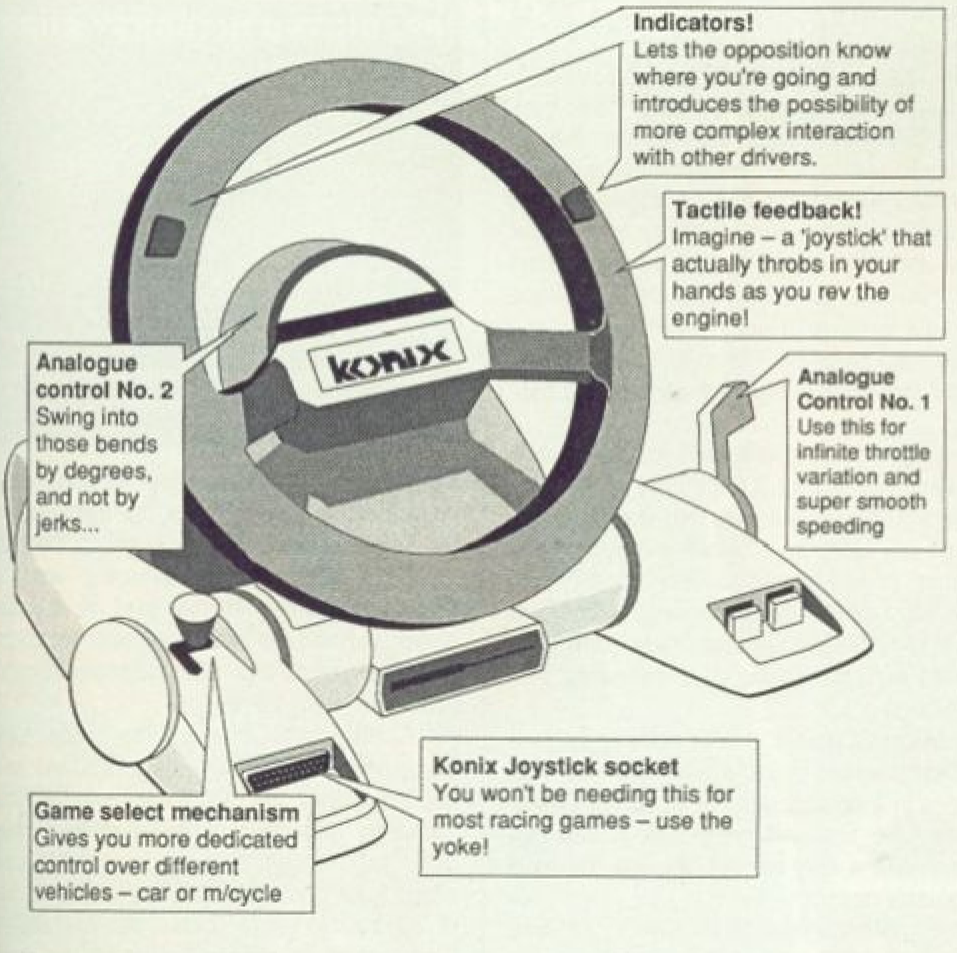
Some companies have made attempts to rectify the situation by producing yokes. These are shaped like wheels or aircraft controls to give you more of a realistic feel. These devices are however, the same old digital joystick in a different guise. They might look the part, but they certainly won't be any more responsive than your ageing Quickshot or Kempston model.

The answer is analogue controls. An analogue joystick, rather than simply turning microswitches on or off, produces a continuously variable signal depending on how far you move the stick off-centre. This is achieved by using two potentiometers, or variable resistors, one for movements in the x-axis and one for movements in the y-axis. These might, for instance, produce voltages between -1 for far left through 0 volts for centre to 1 volt for far right.

The difficulty with this system is that the computer cannot read analogue values directly, so these have to be converted into a digital form first (using an analogue/digital converter – the same gizmo used in sampling sound). This does of course mean that analogue joysticks are both more difficult and consequently more expensive to produce. You are therefore unlikely to find analogue joysticks becoming very popular for use with existing computers, although in the old days the BBC and the Dragon computer both had analogue control capability. Dedicated arcade machines and consoles are a different story entirely.

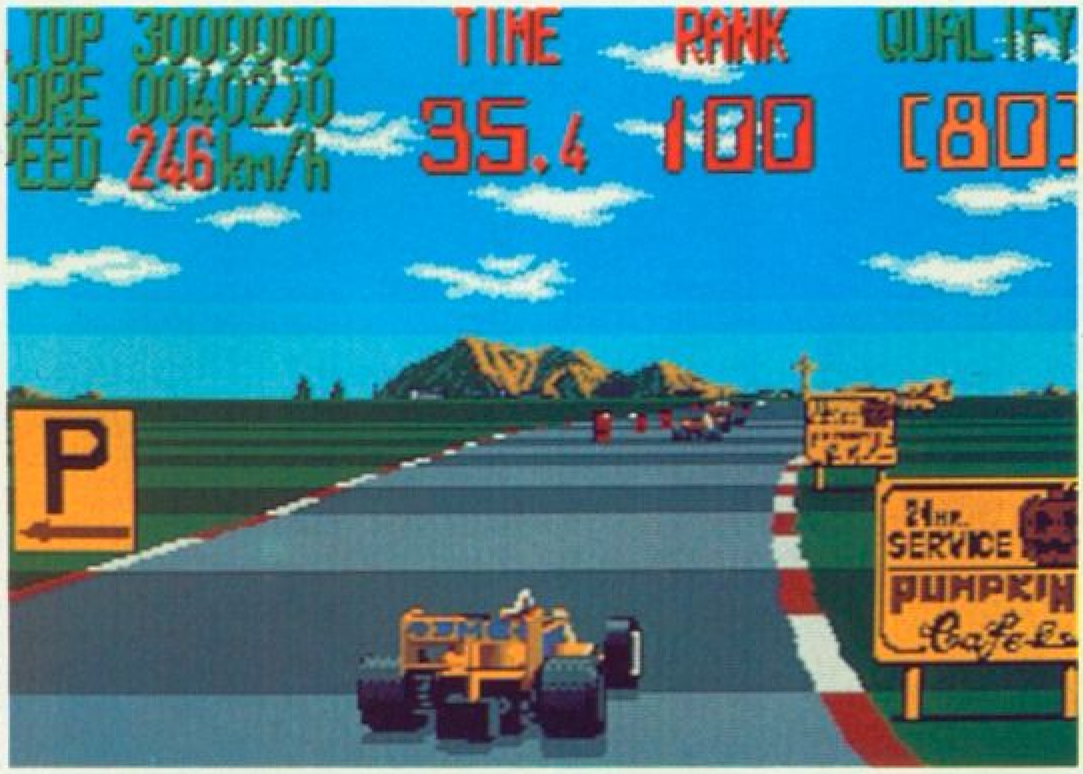
The new Konix machine, unlike the majority of existing consoles uses an analogue control system. This means that you could experience the same sort of sensitive control on Konix games as you do with Outrun and other similar arcade games. Combine this with the Konix chair and you could soon find yourself getting far closer to the feel of real motor racing than you ever dreamed possible without leaving your sitting room!

There's just one snag here: the Konix has yet to actually appear in the shops. Let's hope that other manufacturers take the hint in the meantime and start offering us more sensitive control mechanisms.



Indicators!
Lets the opposition know where you're going and introduces the possibility of more complex interaction with other drivers.
Tactile feedback!
Imagine – a 'joystick' that actually throbs in your hands as you rev the engine!
KONIX
Analogue control No. 2
Swing into those bends by degrees, and not by jerks...
Analogue Control No. 1
Use this for infinite throttle variation and super smooth speeding
Konix Joystick socket
You won't be needing this for most racing games – use the yoke!
Game select mechanism
Gives you more dedicated control over different vehicles – car or m/cycle

This is no yoke, it's serious. The Konix uses analogue controls, giving precise control over speed and steering. This, combined with other features as shown in this illustration, can give racing games a whole new feel. Come on everyone! Let's have cooler controls!



Lap up Grand Prix glory in Virgin's *Continental Circus*

RELEASE BOX

ATARI ST	£19.99dk	OCT. 16th
AMIGA	£19.99dk	OCT. 16th
SPECTRUM	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	OCT. 16th
AMSTRAD	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	OCT. 16th
C64/128	£9.99cs • £14.99dk	OCT. 16th

AMIGA VERSION

An excellent conversion that has inherited all the features of its arcade parent bar the unusual 3D glasses. It may not be the most spectacular release this year, but it is very playable and enjoyable — and that's what counts in the end.

GRAPHICS	**8**	**IQ FACTOR**	**6**
AUDIO	**4**	**FUN FACTOR**	**9**

ACE RATING 875

CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

VIRGIN/MASTERTRONIC'S lap of honour...

ONE of the more popular and unusual arcade racing games to emerge over the last couple of years is Taito's *Continental Circus*. The game itself did not really offer anything that hadn't already been exploited by many other *Pole Position* clones – what was unusual about it were the 3D LCD glasses mounted on a gooseneck in front of the screen. If you managed to get these positioned correctly and comfortably (not always an easy task, especially when the gooseneck was a bit worn) you were treated to a fast 3D display with opposing cars appearing to shoot out of the screen towards you.

The 3D effect has, not surprisingly, been dropped from this conversion, but in all other respects the game is identical to the original. Apparently the sprites and background graphics have been ported directly from the arcade machine, and they do indeed look very nice. Perhaps more importantly, none of the speed or playability of the original machine seems to have been lost on this conversion. This more than makes up for the loss of the three-dimensional element and really proves that the glasses on the original machine were more of a gimmick than an essential accessory.

Continental Circus puts you in the seat of a high performance racing car, competing against 100 other drivers in a series of Grand Prixs set in Brazil, America, France, Monaco, Germany, Spain, Mexico, and Japan. Each course is progressively harder and you must have attained a specific ranking before you can compete on each track. You begin with a ranking of 100, so you certainly have a lot to prove.

Although the controls are reasonably responsive, steering round bends or other cars takes a little mastering at high speeds. It is all too easy to slide across the track into a slower vehicle or billboard and end up trailing smoke. If you do happen to collide with something your car is damaged but you still have a short amount of time to steer it into the pits. Once there your crew rush out, repair the damage and get you back on the road again. Rather helpfully the clock is stopped while this is happening.

One thing to be careful of if you do crash is to make sure you stay in the middle of the road as you pick up speed again. That way the passing cars will attempt to avoid you by passing on either side. Attempt to veer right or left before you have picked up enough speed and you are likely to find another driver coming up fast from behind resulting in an infuriating second collision.

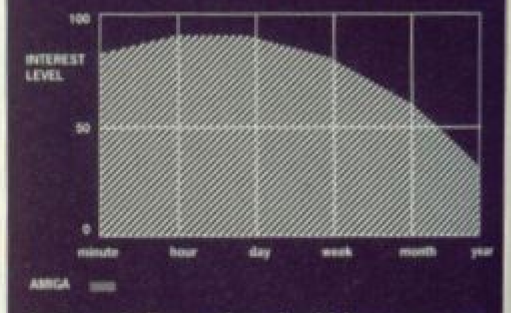
Should you have a double collision or take too long to crawl into the pits then your car explodes in a spectacular ball of flame. Providing you have time left on the clock you can continue with a new car but you will still have lost valuable seconds.

In a similar manner to US Gold's *Out Run* you have a limited amount of time to reach the next checkpoint, which you must do if you are to continue to the end of the course. Take too long and you will end up back on the grid again, and with a lower ranking. You will find yourself making a real effort to achieve sufficient ranking to qualify for the next course in the series, especially as you get to the harder locations. It's intensely annoying when you repeatedly come off the road at the same curve and end up losing valuable seconds or crashing completely, but extremely rewarding when you finally get it right.

Continental Circus offers fairly simple gameplay, and while the graphics and sound are good they are not as complex as those found on many recent 16-bit games. Having said that the game scores on its playability, which is of course the most important aspect of any racing game. It also has that addictive 'One more time' quality that keeps you coming back for more. Definitely one of the more successful arcade conversions of this year.

● Laurence Scotford

PREDICTED INTEREST CURVE



Quite a challenge that should keep you coming back to the track for some time.

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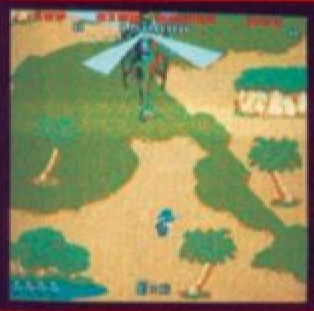
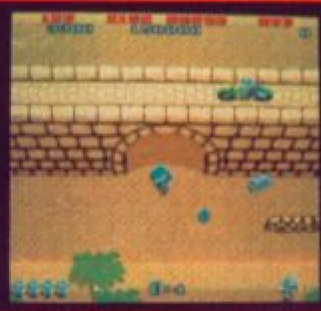
Commodore Amiga screenshot



Commodore Amiga screenshot



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RELEASE DATE:
29th NOV. '89

EUROPEAN RELEASE DATE
13TH NOV. '89

EXPLOSIVES

Also, just released Steve Bak's 'Dogs of War'.

Steve Bak, author of the highly acclaimed 'Goldrunner' and 'Leatherneck', has joined forces with Elite, publishers of the definitive arcade war games; 'Ikari Warriors' and 'Commando', to produce the ultimate game in this classic genre. Drawing on the comments made by thousands of 'Ikari'/'Commando' enthusiasts, Steve has designed a totally new action-war game incorporating features that these classics SHOULD have had:

- Simultaneous 2-player action.
- Extensive mission/weapon/ammo selection options.
- Blistering, arcade action.
- Flawless multi-directional scrolling.
- Totally designed to utilise the capabilities of advanced 16-bit computers – no 8-bit limitations.

Steve Bak's
DOGS OF WAR

Release date: Europe 16th Oct.
UK 1st Nov.

£19.99 ST/Amiga

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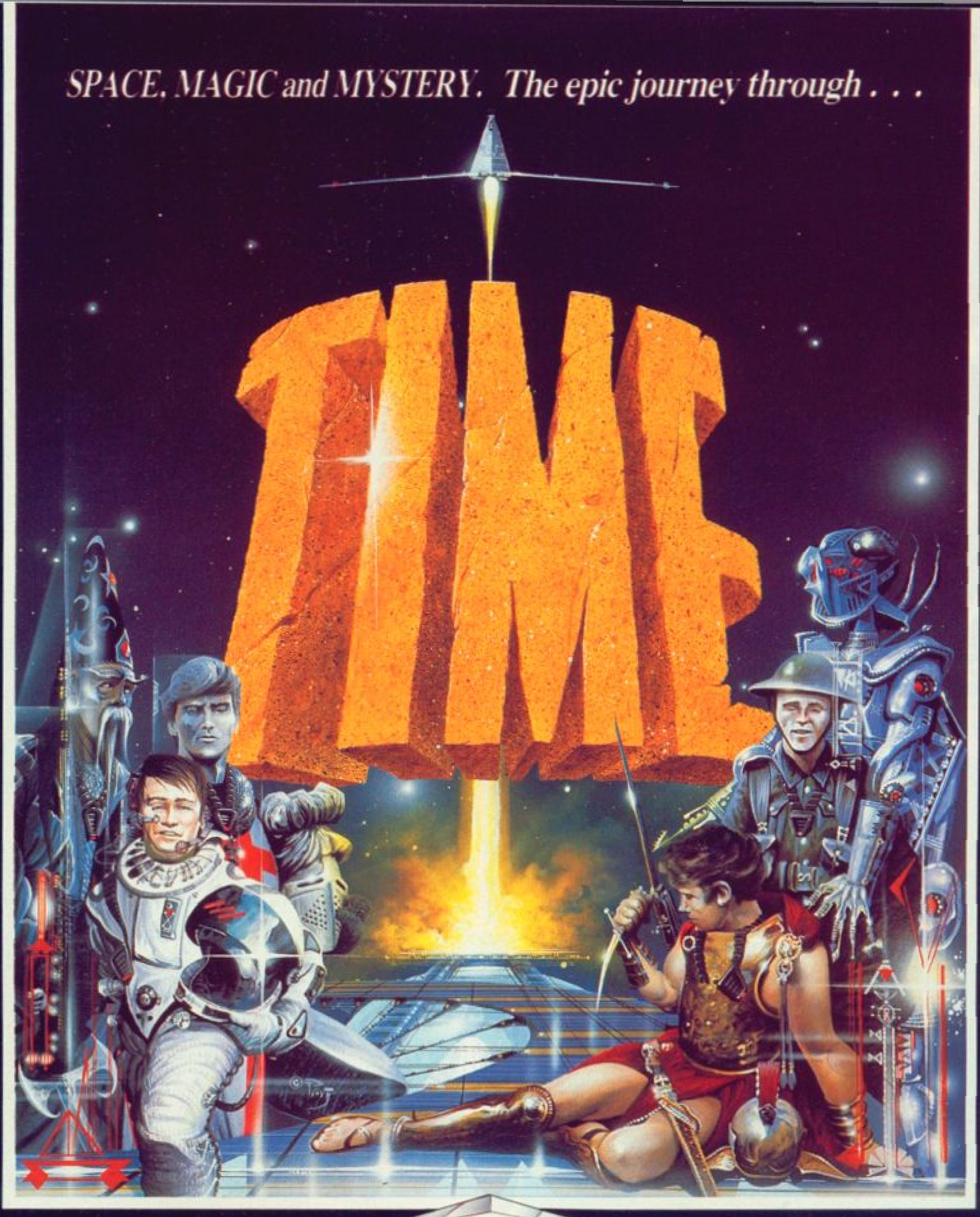
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TIME

EMPIRE

TIME is a visual feast, with over 100 locations and scores of animated characters. A large orbiting space station to explore, time machines to discover and journeys to make into the past. Brave the battlefields of the Crimea, escape the lions of the Circus Maximus and locate the Amulet of Merlin.

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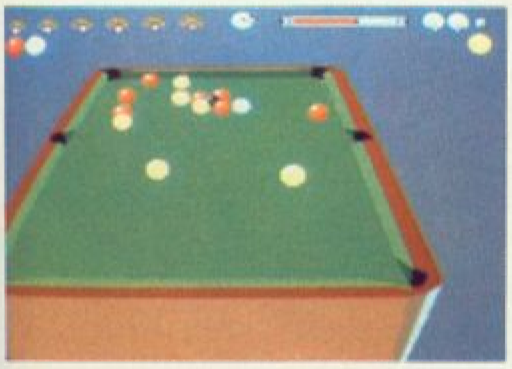
UPDATES

THE LATEST CONVERSIONS GET THE ACE TREATMENT...

AMIGA



3D POOL

Microprose Amiga £24.99

All previous pool sims on any computer have been limited by a rigid viewpoint; Microprose's offering, however, allows almost limitless ways of eyeing up your shot with a unique 3D system which rotates the table.

Most of the aspects of pool are here: you can apply spin, play trick-shots and cannons, vary the power and angle - in fact, just about everything apart from swerving one ball around another. It's a mite tricky to get into, because you haven't got a cue to line anything up with (you have to rely on the `centre of the screen' in relation to the cue-ball), but is ultimately rewarding because of the freedom it offers. It'll be a long time before you beat your first opponent, though - so be patient!

The one big question mark is why it's a fiver more expensive than the ST: some additional sampled crowd tunes don't affect the gameplay to a great degree, and apart from that the action is much the same. A good simulation without many frills, it should please pool fans, but then pool fans have been getting computer pool since 1983 and there don't seem to have been any major advances in gameplay – the rules of the game take care of all that.

ACE RATING: 725

F16 COMBAT PILOT

Digital Integration Amiga £24.95 PC Version reviewed Issue 20 Ace Rating 952

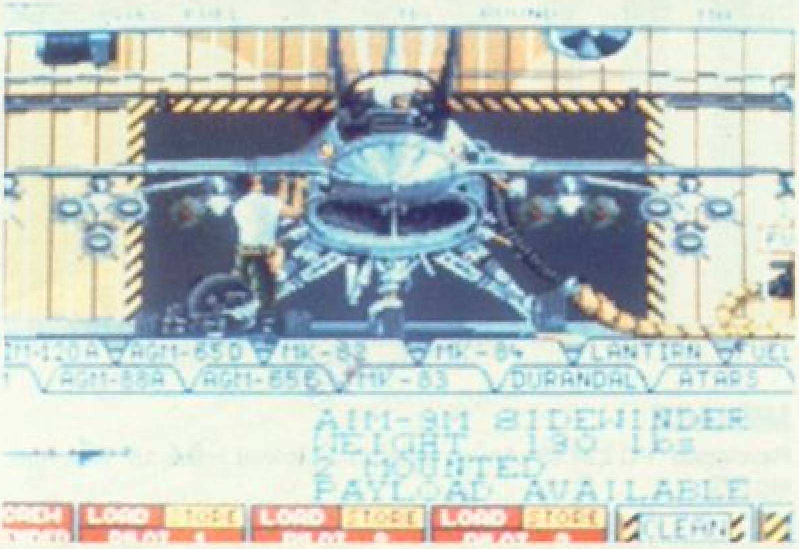
Amiga owning flight simulator fanatics can now breath a deep sigh of relief. Those masters of simulation, Digital Integration, have finally released the Amiga version of *F-16 Combat Pilot*, and it's the best of the bunch.

DI's latest masterpiece has you strapped firmly into the cockpit of the highly sophisticated F-16C Fighting Falcon. Your objective is to successfully complete five missions representing the possible rôles of the F16. These are Scramble (air to air interception), Hammerblow (offensive counterair operations), Deepstrike (interdictor strike), Tankbuster (battlefield close air support), and Watchtower (reconnaissance). Once all five missions have been successfully flown you are allowed to take part in operation conquest, which is is a full-blown campaign.

There is also a training option which gives you the opportunity to practise free flight and landing, as well as each of the set missions. If you are a new player it is best to make full use of the training option before you tackle any of the missions for real.

The Falcon is a deceptive aircraft in many respects. It is surprisingly easy to get into the air, and you will soon find yourself doing rolls and loops with ease. The aircraft's stability is quite incredible and the in-flight systems do tend to look after you if you try to overstretch yourself or the falcon. Having said that, landing the falcon is a fairly tricky manoeuvre which takes some intensive practise to master. You will also find that getting the aerobatics right is not so simple when you've got a couple of Migs on your tail.

The one thing that becomes quickly apparent as soon as you get the falcon in the air is the realism of achieved by the program. As with other Digital Integration flight simulators, the ground detail is minimal for speed, but the response and feel of the aircraft is superlative. The attention to detail that has also been a hallmark of DI's productions is certainly not lacking here. You want to take a squint to one side to see what's flanking you, or look over your shoulder to locate that mig that has entered your radar's blind spot? No problem with this simulator, all-round views can be obtained with one key press!



As if the excellence of the flight itself wasn't enough you can also save your pilot's log for future use, create your own weapon configurations (which can also be saved), and set specific weather conditions. If that still isn't enough then why not hook up to a friend's machine and engage in a one-on-one dogfight via a modem or serial link?

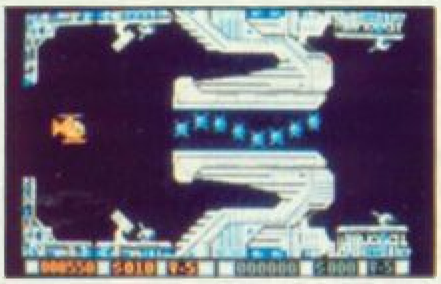
F-16 Combat Pilot has taken nine man years to develop, and playing it you can feel the quality of the work that has gone into this production. Considering that *F-16* retails at the same price as many other inferior games it also represents very good value for money. If you are a connoisseur of Flight Simulators then this is an essential addition to your collection. If you are only looking for a single flight simulator to buy, then without question this has to be the one.

ACE RATING: 970

ST

BLOOD MONEY

Psygnosis ST 24.95: Amiga version reviewed July issueAce Rating 732

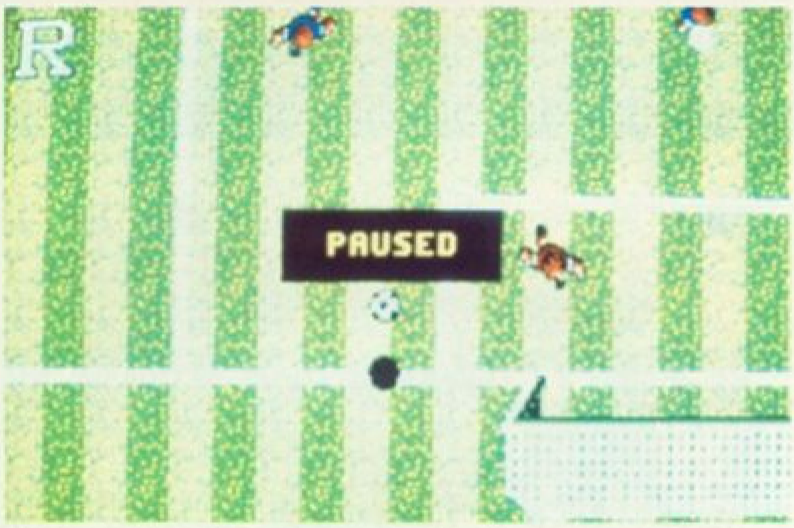


After tackling the baddies in *Menace*, you thought you'd take a little vacation; and what better way to spend your hols than on an alien-killing safari? Well, that's what Psygnosis have got in mind for you: four worlds of death, destruction and sun-tan oil.The situation is this: it's a jungle out there, and nature comes red in tooth and claw, so what you need is handy weaponry. Spread throughout each world are a number of equipment shops, where you can purchase such handy gadgets as three-way fire, bombs, extra lives - all at a cost, however. How do you get the money? By killing aliens. Simple.

In fact, ST *Blood Money* is a little simpler than the joystick-busting Amiga version, and emerges better for it. The music and sound effects are a little weedy and the scrolling slightly jerky, but the gameplay, though tough, is at least compelling. Worth a look.

ACE RATING: 740

PC



MENACE

Psyclapse PC £24.95 Amiga version reviewed Issue 15 Ace Rating 678

As we have come to expect from Psygnosis' Psyclapse label, the graphics in *Menace* are superior to the average PC game. But on every other count there is nothing here that you haven't seen in other shoot-em-ups. The game sets you as a lone fighter attempting to defeat the six evil rulers of the planet Draconia. Each one is encamped in a different scenario and each has to be tackled in sequence.

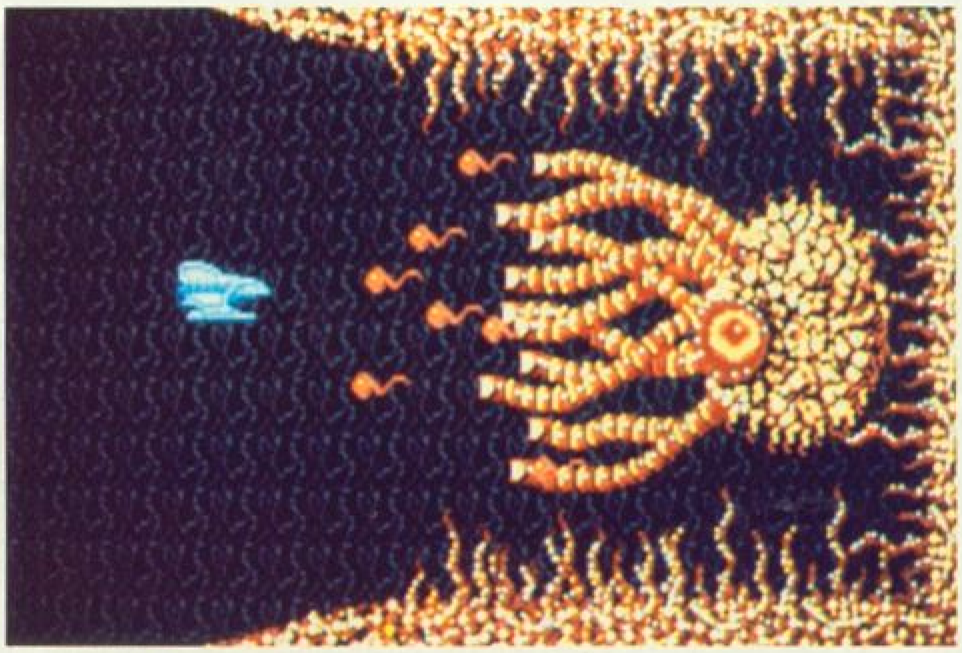
Your fighter begins with a full shield and relatively unsophisticated firepower. As you collide with the myriad alien life forms besetting you your shields are gradually depleted. If they should be completely run down your ship will be destroyed. Fortunately your firepower can be upgraded in the time honoured 'collect the add-ons' manner. This is done by destroying all of the aliens in a single wave.

When the last alien explodes it deposits an oblong tablet. Flying over this will gain you a thousand point bonus. If you have time though you can pepper the oblong with shots and turn it into a more useful item like a canon, laser or more shields. The extra bits are pretty much essential too. In the later scenarios the opposition don't leave you much of a margin for error so you need all the help you can get.

Inevitably you are greeted at the end of each scenario by an end of level guardian. These have a weak spot which if hit enough times will cause them to explode. Unfortunately life is made more difficult by having to avoid the large number of missiles being constantly emitted by the swine. Succeed in destroying your adversary and you are rewarded with progression to the next level.

Although *Menace* doesn't break any new ground it is a very playable and attractive PC shoot-em-up that certainly wouldn't look out of place in the most impressive collection.

ACE RATING: 625



MICROPROSE SOCCER

Microprose PC £24.95 C64 version reviewed Issue 17 Ace Rating 915

Over recent months there has been a gamut of soccer games for 16-bit machines ranging from some really dire efforts through to all-singing, all-dancing first class simulations. Fortunately *Microprose Soccer* falls into the latter category.

When the first version of the game for the C64 was launched, back in February this year, it was awarded an impressive Ace Rating of 915, and rightly so. At the time it was easily the best soccer game available, although now Anco's Kick Off provides strong opposition.

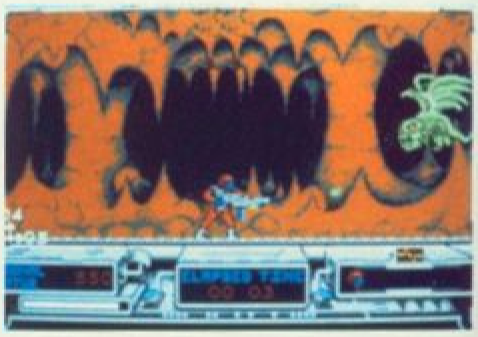
This conversion to the IBM PC has lost none of the superb playability of the original game. An overhead view of the pitch is used to good effect, and enables you to see exactly who is in control of the ball at all times. It also allows a wide variety of kicks to be implemented ranging from a simple chip shot to scissor kicks and banana shots. The game is accompanied by a rather strained sounding ditty from the PC's speaker. There are some very nice touches too. Goals, for instance are shown again in TV style action-replays, complete with a video rewinding effect.

The game implements two sets of rules: good old Association Soccer and Indoor Six-a-side American rules. There are four competitions that can be played: Microprose International Challenge, World Cup Tournament, Soccer League, and Two Player Friendly.

The game can be played with either keyboard or joystick, although I wouldn't recommend the former option unless you have very dexterous fingers! Gameplay tends to be quick and eventful with many goals even though the maximum length of play for a single match is twelve minutes.

PC owners looking for a quick armchair dash across the pitch need look no further. *Microprose Soccer* is a definite winner.

ACE RATING 900



BAAL

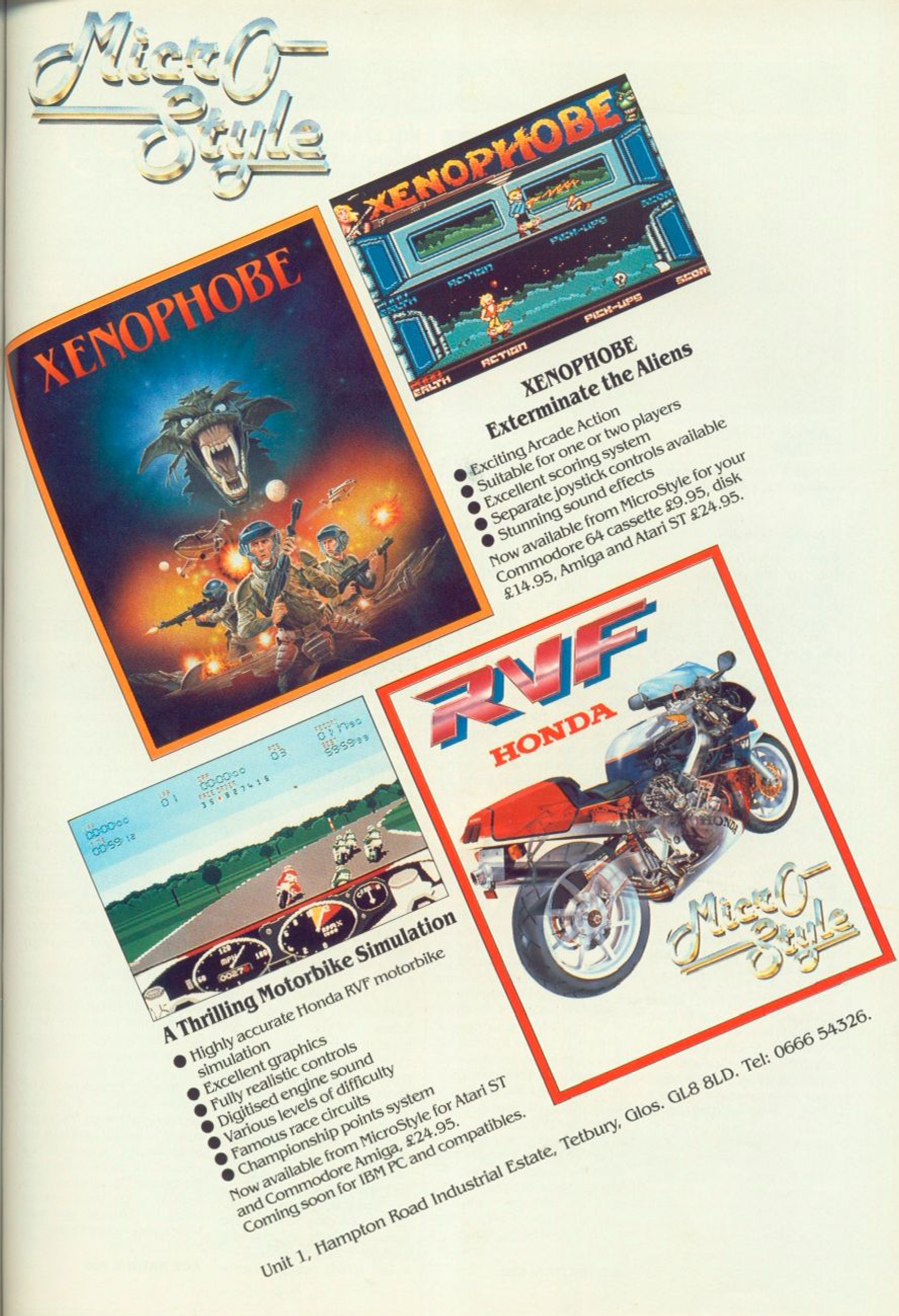
Psyclapse PC £24.95 ST Version reviewed Issue 19 Ace Rating 726

In the tradition of good old Hammer Horror an unsuspecting archæologist uncovers an evil that has lain hidden for thousands of years. The removal of an ancient plinth releases the demon Baal who takes possession of a top secret war machine with which he intends to rule the world. A crack squad of Time Warriors is quickly set up — their objective is to find and destroy Baal and return with the Time Machine.

Baal is basically a very attractive looking platform game. You have to guide each of the time warriors through Baal's lair, which is of course populated by a number of devious traps and monsters. There are some obstacles which have to be thought about if you are to get past them, which saves this from being a run-of-the-mill jump and shoot affair. There are also extra weapons to be collected to ease your progress through the game. You'll need them too - the lair is a fair size and certainly not easy.

As with all Psyclapse games, the animation is excellent and complemented by nicely drawn multi-layered backgrounds. The PC version looks as good and plays just as well as the Atari version, and although this is by no means the world's most original game it does promise more lasting entertainment than most efforts in a similar vein. A worthwhile buy.

ACE RATING: 700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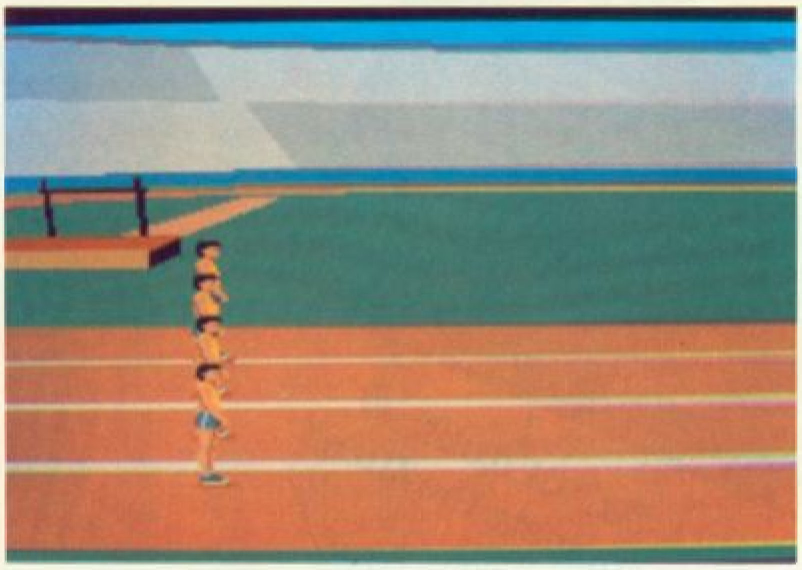


GAMES: SUMMER EDITION

US GOLD £19.99, C64 version reviewed issue 15, Ace Rating 753

More joystick waggling from the masters of sports simulations, Epyx. This time the scene is the 1988 Olympics in Seoul. The game is apparantly officially endorsed by the American Olympics team, which of course has absolutely no bearing on its qualities. There are eight different events to compete in: Sprint Cycling, 400m Hurdles, Uneven Parallel Bars, Rings, Pole Vaulting, Archery, Hammer Throwing, and Diving.

Some of the sprites look a bit blocky in comparison to many ST and Amiga games, but the superb three dimensional background graphics more than make up for this. These are well-demonstrated by the superb zoom across the stadium at the end of the opening sequence.

Some of the events, like Archery, are easily mastered, but Diving, Rings, and Parallel Bars all require a degree of skill that will take considerable practise to acquire. This is no problem as there is plenty of opportunity to practise individual events before competing for real.

Any one who enjoys sports simulations is going to love this game, which has to be Epyx's best yet. All of the events are easy to learn, but present enough of a challenge to keep you amused for some time. As an added bonus there are also attractive medal ceremonies. A must for all joystick athletes.

ACE RATING: 800

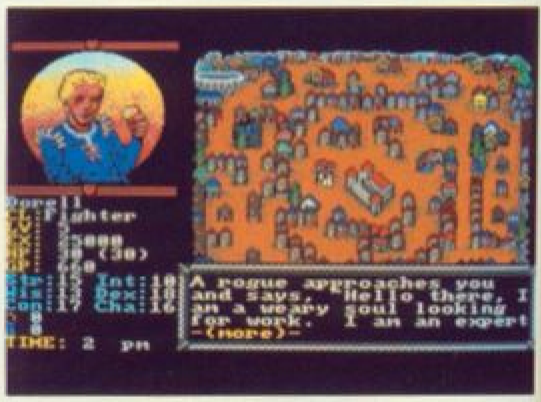
HILLSFAR

US GOLD £24.99, C64 Version reviewed issue 21, Ace Rating 732

Hillsfar is another SSI/TSR game in the Advanced Dungeons and Dragons series. Having suffered the abominable dirge that accompanies the title screen you are presented with a set of 'Camp Options' that allow you to load and save characters, or create new ones.

Once you have chosen the character you wish to play with then the game begins with a ride to the town of Hillsfar. This involves an arcade style sequence in which you control the speed of your horse and its jumping. To get to the town in one piece you must leap over the objects in your path.

Within the town you are free to explore as you wish, and can follow any quests that become apparent during your exploration. There is also a further arcade sequence to be enjoyed by entering the arena. The game now becomes a primitive combat affair.



A rogue approaches you and says, "Hello there, I am a weary soul looking for work. I am an expert
-(more)-

TIME: 2 pm

Enter a building and the view changes from 3D with map to a large Gauntlet style perspective. Inside the building you can explore further, opening chests, and avoiding guards and floor traps.

Hillsfar is nicely presented, and the gameplay is pitched quite well, but there is not really much here to keep you entertained for long.

ACE RATING: 750

SPECTRUM +3

APB

DOMARK £14.99, ATARI ST version reviewed issue 25, Ace Rating 762

APB was one of those arcade games that, while it was far from advanced on the graphics and sound front, scored highly in the playability stakes. Colourful, cartoon style sprites and easily mastered gameplay gave it an appeal lacking in many more sophisticated machines. It casts you as officer Bob, a hard-working highway patrolman trying to keep up with his daily quota of arrests. While screeching round the streets in your car arresting minor offenders, you may also have to follow up an All Points Bulletin for the arrest of a major criminal. Once you have him, it's back to the station to squeeze out a confession.

When this latest Tengen conversion appeared on the Atari ST it looked fine. The programmers had managed to capture the same amusing cartoon qualities of the original coin-op. The Spectrum version suffers seriously because of the loss of this aspect. While the sprites are all well drawn and animated, the monochrome green display looks dull and manages to make the game appear lifeless and uninteresting.

This version is still highly playable however, and if you are a Spectrum owner who liked the arcade original then you can probably live with the inadequate graphics. I can't it keeping anybody's interest for long though.

ACE RATING: 680

ST

TV SPORTS: FOOTBALL

Cinemaware, £24.99, Amiga version reviewed issue 18, Ace Rating 892

The ST has certainly had its fair share of sports simulations, and numbering among those are plenty of attempts at capturing the essence of Soccer. American Football sims are a lot harder to come by, but gridiron fanatics need look no further, Cinemaware have finally released the ST version of the ultimate American Football game.

If you are already familiar with Cinemaware's interactive movie software then you will not be surprised to learn that graphically the game is excellent. During normal play the grid is shown in a high 3D perspective from the Offence end, but when a field goal is attempted an impressive 'Kicker's eye' perspective is adopted. Additionally there are some attractive TV style sequences at half-time and before the game.

From the main menu it is possible to view game schedules and team standings as well as playing exhibition or league games. There is also a fairly essential practice option which allows you to try out various plays as either offence or defence and to improve your punts and field goals. Once you are feeling confident its off to the field for a real game.

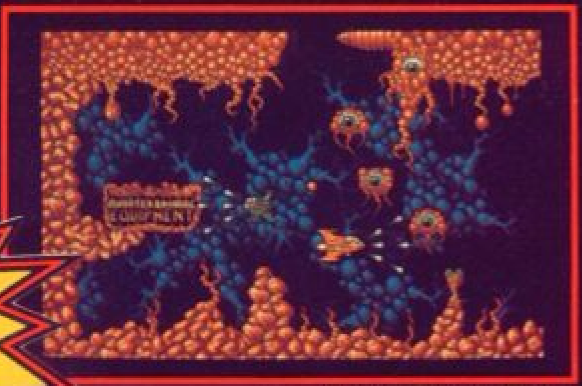
For each down you have a short amount of time to call a play before the view of the grid appears. During the actual play the computer controls all the players, bar the one or two under human control. This feature is intelligent in as much as the computer gradually learns your style of play and tries to emulate it.

Unless you hold a game over to view it at a later time, all other games in the league that do not involve human players are played simultaneously. By holding games you can then view them to observe future opponents' tactics.

American Football fanatics will love this game, but if you are a beginner, don't worry. It's not too difficult to get into, and there is a comprehensive booklet on the rules of the game included with the software. There is also a lot to learn by simply sitting back and letting the computer play itself. Unreservedly recommended.

ACE RATING: 900

Blood Money



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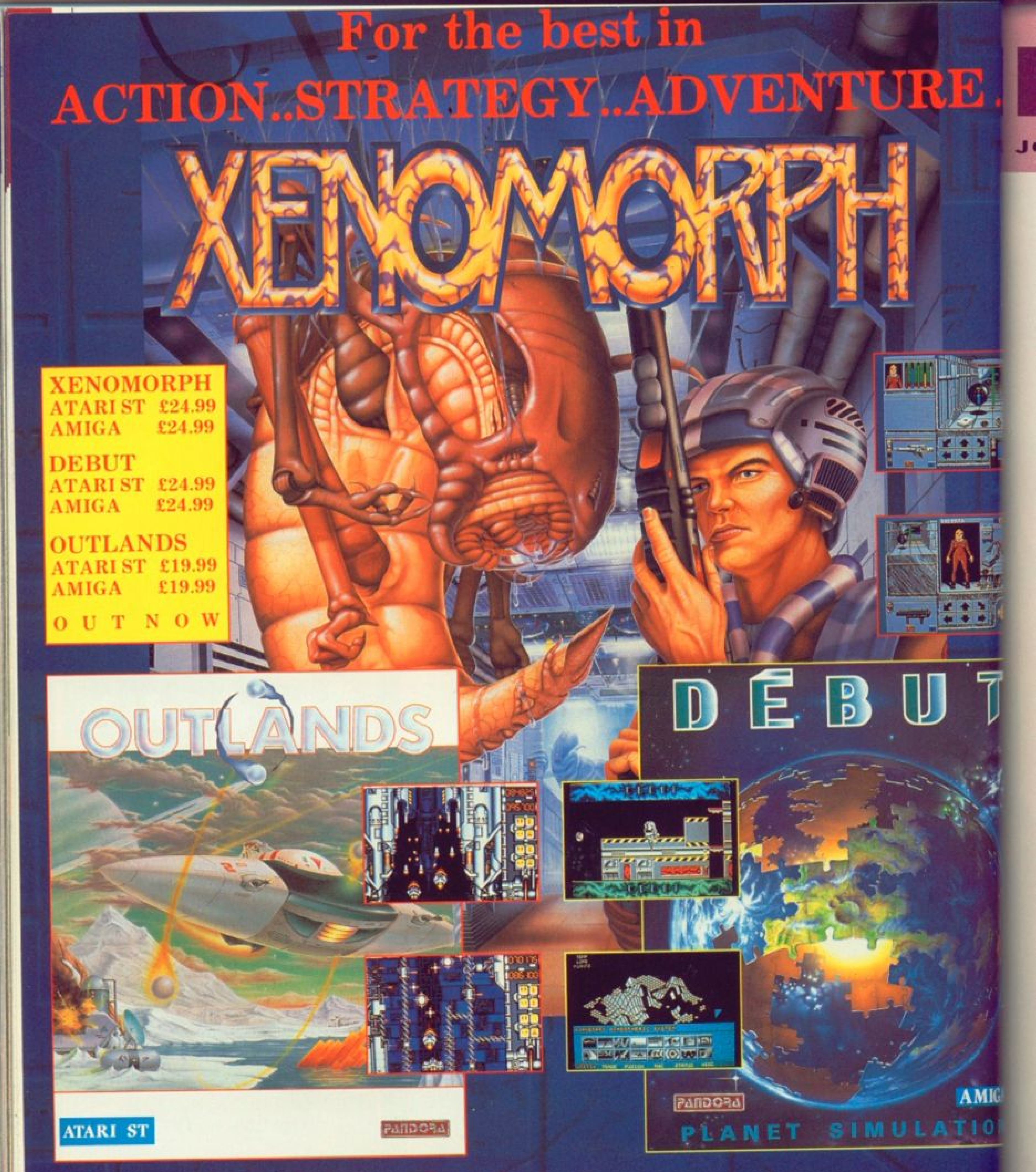
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IN SEQUENCE

JON BATES CHECKS OUT TWO VERY IMPRESSIVE PACKAGES...

As reported last month, the British Music Fair this year saw the launch of several new pieces of software. ACE picks the best of these and subjects them to the usual rigorous session on the test bench. Two exciting new packages are up for consideration; the all British 'Virtuoso' sequencer for the ST and the first advanced music package designed solely for the Amiga, the much awaited 'Music X'. Which one is the best? Jon Bates delivers the results.

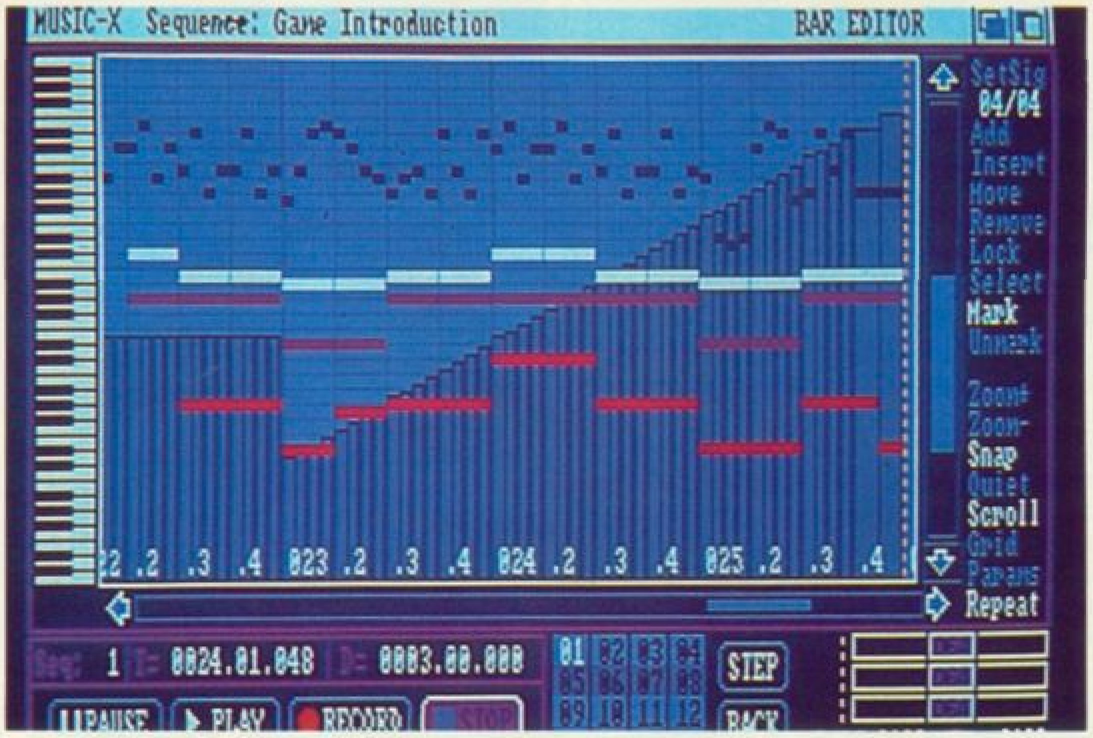
VIRTUOSO

Virtuoso is a MIDI sequencer designed to rival the best that the foreign software houses can put out; in short a package with top professional specifications but at a price that is competitive enough to appeal to the average home user.

The first thing to note about *Virtuoso* is that it has done away with the ST GEM environment. The claim is that GEM is slow in operation and meant that operations took a longer time than was acceptable for studio work. Digital Muse, the developing company for the package, have therefore written a completely new multi-tasking operating system designed especially for *Virtuoso*. This has given the software several advantages over any rivals.

The first thing is that the resolution per quarter note (that's a crotchet in traditional terms!) is 480 clicks. To put this in perspective this actually means that every note worth a quarter of a four beat bar is split into 480 divisible parts. If my abacus serves me well this is a total of 1920 clicks per bar, which outstrips any of it's rivals by miles.

Other advantages are that all disk operations are carried out as a background operation, leaving the program to run. Recording and playback are carried out as work is saved to disk which saves quite a bit of time. The same goes for print outs. It has very generous text handling capabilities so that instead of having to scrabble about for bits of paper to note down various relevant information it can be saved as part of the program and printed out as you work. Finally the screen re-draws itself much faster than the ordinary ST program.



Music-X – multi-option, multi-tasking and more besides!

All this super speed and techno superiority wouldn't count for a jot unless the program was easy to use and its intricacies easy to follow. Thankfully this is pretty well true of *Virtuoso* all mouse actions are duplicated on the qwerty keyboard and there are no drop-down menus.

Virtuoso is divided into several main pages. The main area of activity is the Block page. Up to 99 tracks make up a block (a section of a piece, and each track a separate instrument) and these run from the top of the screen and can be scrolled through. The screen design is not unfamiliar with the controlling icons set to the right along with the counters and section markers. Since there are no menus, all the functions you want are on-screen all the time.

All active tracks have a bar meter and can be set to on or off. However in the block page it didn't seem possible to 'solo' any one track although you could do this from the edit page. Recording is subject to options. Apart from the usual straightforward recording you can also have automatic drop in and out at specified bars, and cycle record. With the latter you can either layer a track up part by part or do a multi-take, which lets you try out different ideas for say a solo and each pass is taken on a separate free track. You can then pick the best or edit two or three takes together.

After recording your first track the options for real time processing are formidable; being real time it is not altering the actual track data. Apart from quantize there is the extremely useful addition of volume. Most MIDI devices now obey volume control and it means that successful balance can be set up from the screen rather than fiddling around with sliders and mixing desks or, even worse, the buttons on the front panel of a tone module - a sure-fire rectal discomfort.

Many other options are available on-screen as well : program change, pan position, looping, track delay, transpose, note limits, velocity and compression plus individual MIDI filters. Tracks can be cleared, copied and removed completely.

By building up a number of tracks, you have created a section of music - the block - which you then file away by moving to the library page. One thing I found a bit quirky was that to work on a new block you have to create or copy the old block in order to make a space for it in the library - which seemed a bit odd.

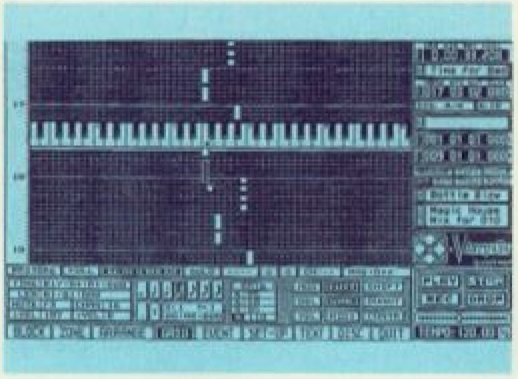
Editing can be done in two ways. The graphic editing is done rather in the manner of a piano roll. The notes roll down from top to bottom of the screen in the form of squares or oblongs and the pitch is indicated on a piano keyboard under which the display scrolls. The keyboard is moveable in all directions and can also be displayed either in part or in full.

The other method of editing is by a data stream which shows all the data relevant to every MIDI event numerically. Quantize is data-altering here and an extremely wide range of options is open for you. Apart from the Note On and moving notes there are some very fine ways of shifting infinitesimal amounts of time surrounding the notes, thanks to the high resolution. Notes can be captured around a definite beat to user-definable amounts. The strength of the quantize can also be set as well as useful features such as deleting all double notes, lining up chords to start together and a humanize function which adds a percentage error to

DO CLICKS MATTER?

Virtuoso can divide a four-beat bar into 1920 time-slices or 'clicks'. So what?

If you want a piece to be recorded via MIDI with every fine nuance of phrasing and timing a high resolution like this is essential. It will also come into its own for absolute accuracy when synchronized up to film and video. It's not that other software is inaccurate - just that this one is more accurate. It follows too that any corrections you need to make can be done with extra fine accuracy.



Virtuoso for the ST – fully specfied, powerful, and easy to use.

mechanical tracks.

If this is not enough, another page, called the Zone page, lets you define areas of tracks and get to work to reset any of the note parameters recorded: the note numbers themselves, the velocity, the length, the start time, a re-scaling the velocity over pre-defined periods either up or down, although volume didn't appear to be an option. Other processes controlled by the Zone page are the merging, and general cut and past facilities.

Blocks are sorted into a full-blown piece in the Arrange page. There are eight streams that can run simultaneously and so therefore up to eight blicks can be run at any one time. Tempo shifts can also be inserted here although transposition didn't seem to be an option.

Virtuoso will save in its own format or MIDI file format and there are options within the program left for future developments such as using 64 tracks of MIDI, assigning notes or MIDI events to control parts of the program and synchronization from SMPTE format. Altogether a superb and very well thought through program.

***Virtuoso* ST £225.00**
Contact **The Digital Muse** on 01-586 3445

MUSIC-X

Music X is not only a sequencer but also a voice programmer, a sampler, and a MIDI controller! It takes full advantage of the multi-tasking capabilities of Amiga and is the first package specifically designed for it. Although it will run an an A500, it is recommended that you have a at least 1 megabyte of RAM. As a sequencer it doesn't need any external MIDI devices. Since it can play back four samples/internal sounds simultaneously it makes an ideal starting point for anybody who hasn't got any MIDI equipped instruments. The program does not come with a MIDI interface; it will work with any Amiga MIDI interface so take your pick.

Three disks make up the total package: the program disk plus examples and utilities. There is also a very comprehensive 500 page manual.

The default page is the sequencer equipped with the familiar tape recorder icons of Pause, Record, and Stop with Fast Forward and Back. In addition to this are Begin - which is in effect jump to zero - and End which locates the last two bars if you wish to add on extra bits or continuations. All the icons behave very much as you would expect with no nasty surprises.

There are four Cue bottons which can be set at any point within the piece for fast access to crucial points. You can compare the stored versions of parts with the version just recorded by hitting Preview which plays back the record buffer. Once fixed on the sequencer list, its status is listed. Bar length, memory size, MIDI channel, time code, name and whether it is playing the internal voices or MIDI external voices. The internal voices are treated as MIDI channels and there is provision for more MIDI instruments to be added at a latter date.

Any sequence can be turned off and on although not in mid flight. Once the piece is playing, the top right hand window shows the sequences that are playing at any given bar. The tempo is set from the slider and if you want to alter the number of beats per bar this is catered for by a large amount of time signatures.

On the sequencer page the output channels can be set - all input channels are set from the filter page. The sequencer will punch in and out either automatically from setting the bars or manually. As you would expect, sequences can be copied, merged, over-recorded, overdubbed or specified events extracted.

Music X has very comprehensive synchronization features. It will respond to its own internal clock, external MIDI clock, internal Video clock, which can be used as a guide for timings against video, the new MIDI time code, and SMPTE timing code; for the latter you will need external SMPTE hardware. It will also sync up with drum machines and other sequencers to any given point by using the MIDI song position pointer.

For editing, there are two methods: the Bar Editor which is a bar graph display and a data stream editor (event editor). In the former, notes are represented by oblongs with different MIDI channels having different colours; upright bars refer to the velocity and aftertouch. These are overlaid on a grid and the display scrolls from left to right. On the far left is a vertical piano keyboard which provides a pitch guide, although notes are not actually highlighted on it.

Quantization will only work on notes once they are in memory - there is no quantize on record and so it is all data altering and not real time. Having set the grid size to which the main beat should conform, you then quantize the notes to within a certain percentage either side. Quantization can also be applied to velocity and aftertouch which includes the ability to increase or decrease the velocity and/or aftertouch over a specified area, either linearly or with a random factor - 'humanize' for want of a better word.

Editing is achieved with the cursor with the options of add, move, delete, mark, cut and paste. Notes can be lengthened or shortened by dragging on them. There are some record facilities in the edit mode and you can hear the sequence back either on it's own or with the rest of the sequences. Unfortunately the screen keeps scrolling after you hit the stop button which made it awkward to locate a point exactly and there didn't seem to be any way to manually scroll through the part at your own speed and hear the notes although you can turn the scroll function off.

Transposing sequences is via the Play Sequences, the method of song assembly used. It also seemed to be the only way of transposing entire sequences, which I found not to be the most satisfactory of methods. Perhaps a window that would have allowed visual assembly of sequences would have been better. Data is saved in three formats and there is an additional utility program to do the conversions: Music-X file, MIDI file, which enables it to be loaded into other MIDI sequencers, and Amiga SMUS files.

The filter page maps out the MIDI information coming in and routes it to wherever it is wanted. This is a most comprehensive page which will also modify MIDI messages as well as dividing any keyboard up into a split MIDI keyboard. It will also magnify or divide things like pitchbend so that they don't have so much effect when swapped from one instrument to another. Any set-up you make is stored as one of four keymaps.

Music-X is unique in that it is a complete suit of programs under one umbrella and all departments are very well catered for. All Amiga owners should start saving now - even without MIDI you can still use the internal voices. There were one or two things that I felt were missing, but overall the best package that has graced the ports of my Amiga.

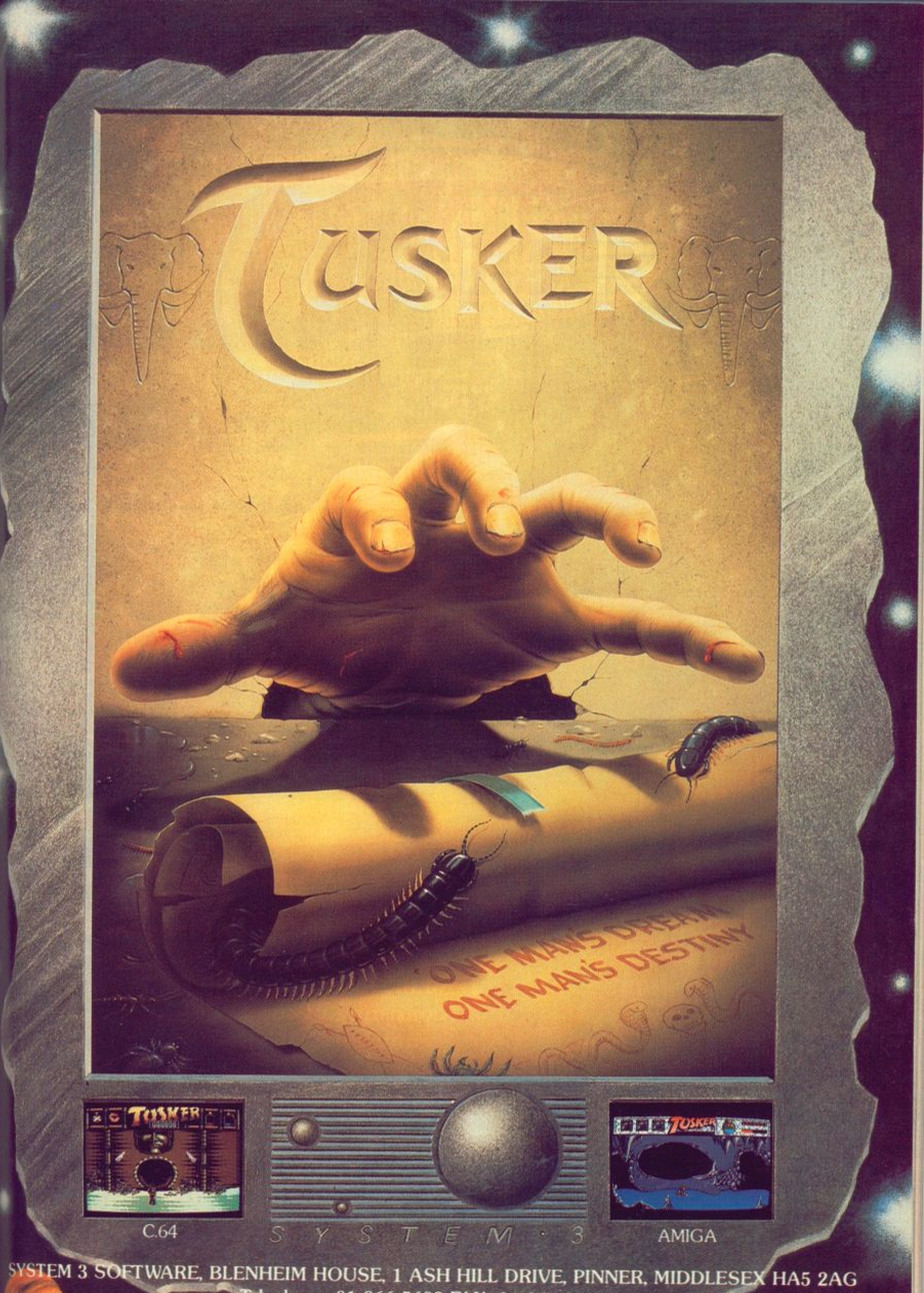
***Music-X* Amiga £199.00**
Contact **SDL** 01 300 3399

SAMPLING

Music-X will work with both IFF and Sonix formats. It gives all the relevant details regarding the sample; highest notes range, memory size and tuning and the channel to which it is assigned. You can re-edit and re-tune the samples via the editor that has, amongst other things, a 16 stage envelope for the sound with variable sustain point. Samples are also squeezed up and unused portions disposed with to make more memory space. The Amiga will only run four samples simultaneously but these can be swopped around judiciously to give a really big sound to the track you are working on.

VOICING IT

If you are working with MIDI instruments, the Librarian page will collect the voice information from all the synths in the set up. To do this it will need some sort of MIDI handshakes in store. Some are already provided, but it is not too much problem to create your own. In this section are three excellent graphic voice editing programs for the DX21/100, TX81Z and D50. These on their own are worth quite a bit; one of the advantages of Music-X is that voicing modules will be available to update that part of the program. But for the ability to re-voice a synth without re- booting I would gladly pay more than this program costs.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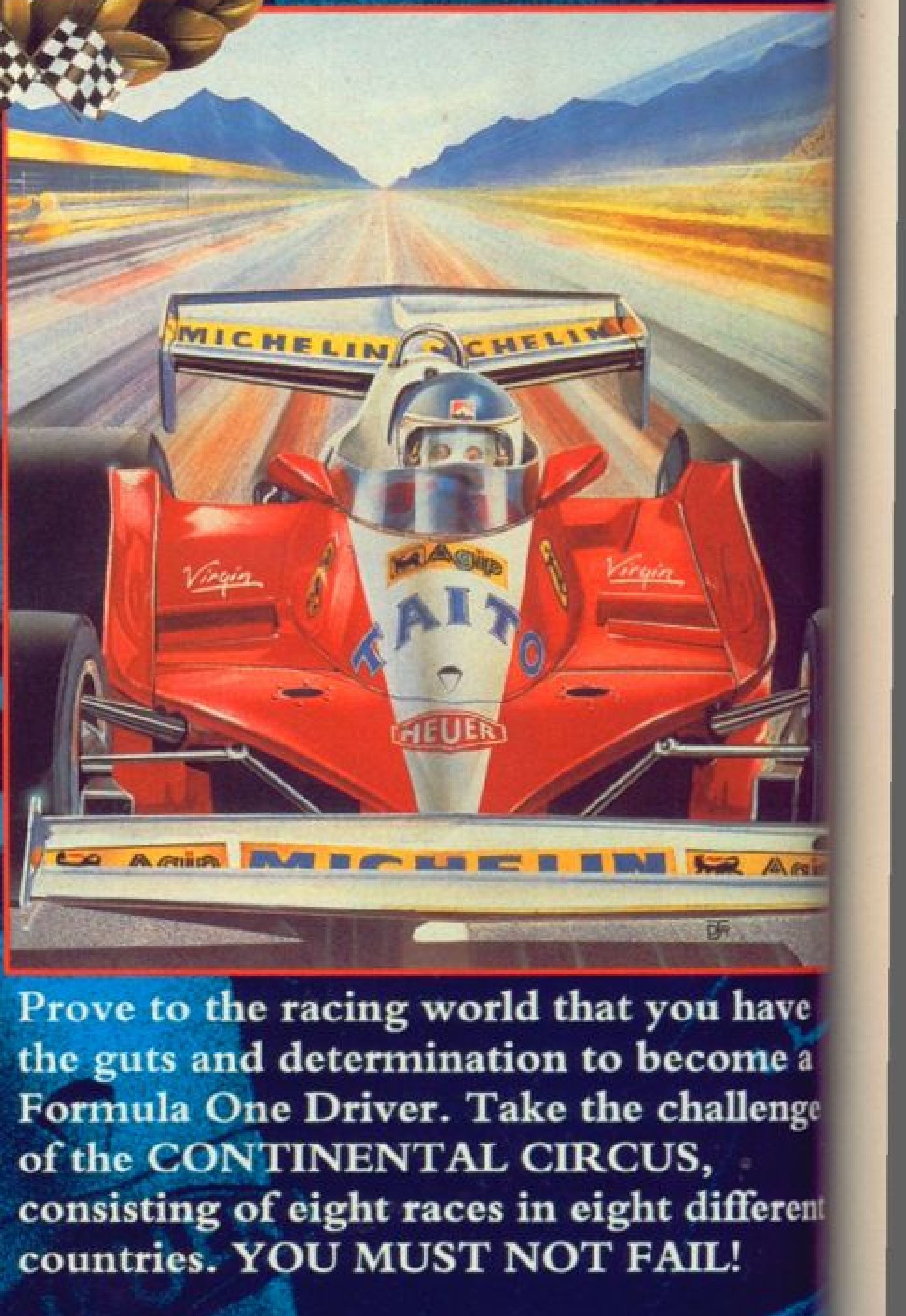
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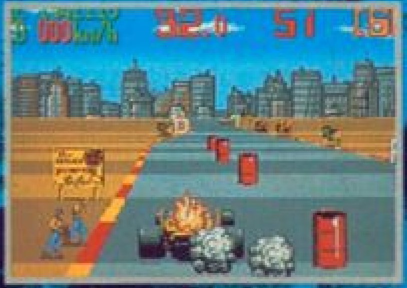
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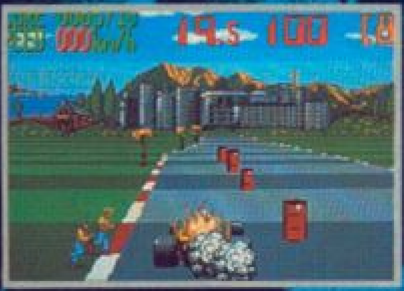
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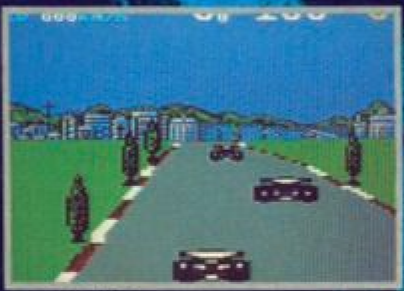
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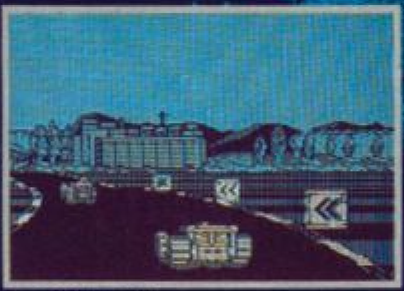
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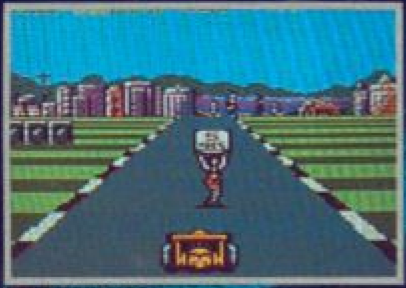
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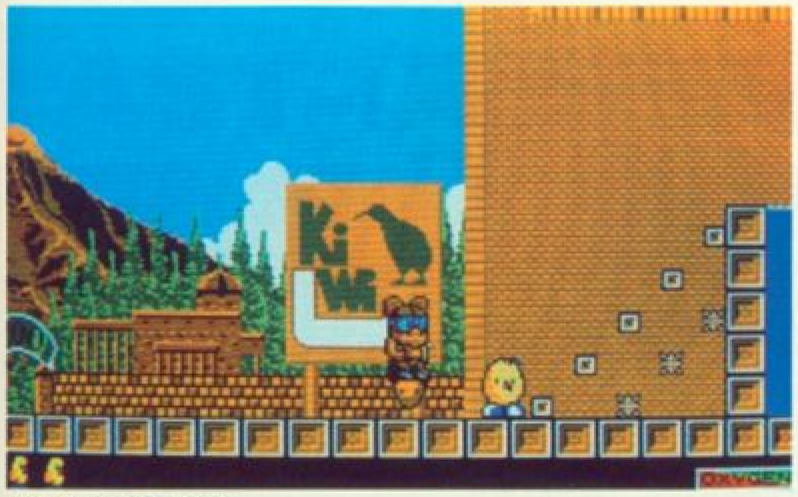
TRICKS 'N' TACTICS

A HELPING HAND, COURTESY OF OTHER ACE READERS



New Zealand Story

C64 POKES GALORE

Courtesy of Casey Gallacher, Reading here are a few helpful infinite lives pokes to give C64 games players a helping hand. **For all of these pokes you should load the game as normal then reset and enter the poke followed by the SYS call to restart the game.**

NINJA COMMAND

POKE 10457,173
SYS 14848 or SYS 13810 for the top score

BOMBO

POKE 11417,173
SYS 387

PHOBIA

POKE 5390,189
SYS 2172

DOMINATOR

POKE 2293,165
SYS 2113, then reset and enter SYS call again.

LICENCE TO KILL
LICENCE

LICENCE TO KILL

POKE 8448,173
POKE 14730,173
POKE 33056,173
POKE 11565,173
POKE 15185,173
POKE 63142,173
also POKE 13591,173 for unlimited ammo.

SYS 5346 (or SYS 32768 for a little message).

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY

How is it that the programmer's of the cutest game of 1989 also turn out to be the most foulmouthed. Shmezz 'n' Theo of Luton tell us how to get infinite lives.

While playing press the DEL key and the game will reset to the title screen. Now type M and the laser gun sound will be heard. Now type in sequence MOTHERFUCKENKIWIBASTARD and a fancy little tune will be played. When you next start the game your lifeometer will show a small kiwi and a 9+ sign.

They also sent us the following useful tips:

LEVEL 1_2: Shoot the baddies and collect the blue "E" on the floor to the right. Now hop back to the point you started at and stand on the last two blocks on the left side of the second floor. Shoot towards the left wall while doing tiny hops. A large black hole with fire in it will appear. Hop inside this and you will reappear underneath the kiwi.

LEVEL 2_2: Find a balloon and float up to where the bears on balloons emerge. Stand to the right of the green left-pointing arrow and shoot the bears' balloons away. Repeat this until another hole appears. Now hop into the hole and this will put you underneath the kiwi again.

LEVEL 2_4: Just before you rescue the kiwi stand on top of the steps and shoot towards the right wall. A hole will appear. Hop into this and you won't have to kill the big bad octopus.

Let fire bugs duplicate and shoot them to get a selection of useful goodies like Potions (these make you invincible for about 20 seconds), or Books (which kill everything on the screen).

If you are a double-jointed C64 owner her is another infinite lives cheat for *New Zealand Story* from Brian Docherty, Glasgow.

Place the side of your hand over the keys W,E,R,T,Y. Now bring the palm of your hand over S, D, F, G, H and press the spacebar. The border will turn grey indicating that the cheat mode has been activated. This cheat will also work on level one of Dominator.

DUNGEON MASTER

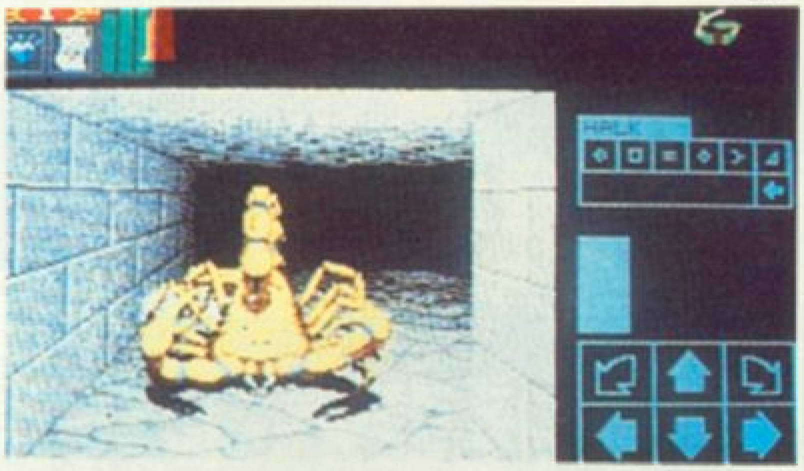
Nathan Powell from Beckenham provides a little help to those still puzzling over this superb game from Mirrorsoft.

"What is underfoot is still overhead": Place shields from skeletons on the pressure pads and step out of the way to dodge the fireballs. Now walk onto them.

"This fountain takes one wish": It also takes one coin.

"Time is of the essence": (Hit and Run). Drop items not needed to fight and press the gem in, then

➩110

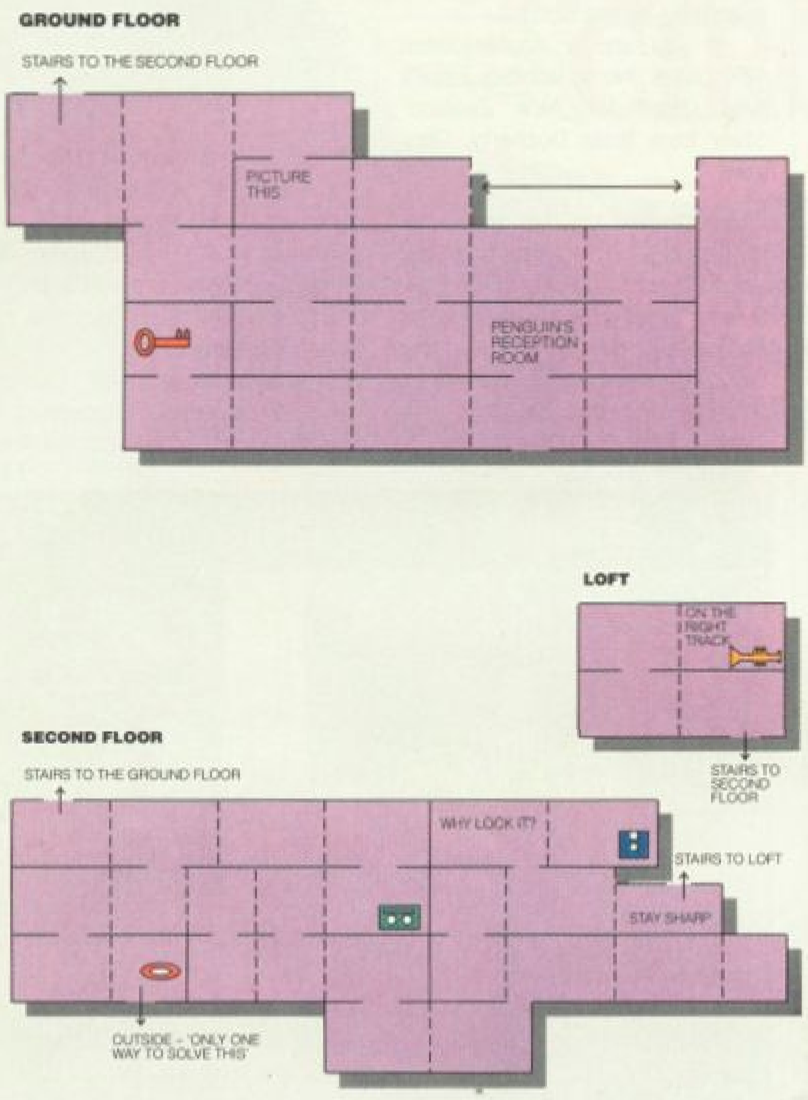


Dungeon Master

LEVEL	ITEM	ABILITIES
12	Armour of Darc	Makes you hard, see
10,11,12	Armour of Lyte	Weighs less
7	Bolt Blade	shoots lightning *
7	Crown of Nerrax	+10 wisdom
11	Diamond Edge	Extra damage
7	Dragon Spit	+7 Mana
14	Eye of Time	Freezes life*
7	Ferel Pendant	+1 Wizard Level
14	Fire Staff & Power Gem	+2 Priest
7	Flamebain	+12 AntiFire
13	Flamitt	Shoots fireballs
11	Fury	Shoots fireballs *
10	Hardcleave	Extra damage
7	Illumelet	Creates little light
7	Inquisitor	+2 Mana & extra dam.
12	Masterkey	Door within tomb
11	Moonstone	+3 Mana
3,7,9,12	Ra Keys	Doors within tomb
11	Ruby Key	As above
7	Sceptre of Lyf	+5 Mana, heals & lights
12	Snake Staff	+8 Mana, Heals
7	Staff of Claws	+4 Mana
10	Staff of Mana	+10 Mana, Dispell
9	Storm Ring	Shoots Lightning *
3	Teo Wand	+6 Mana, Calm spell
6	Vorpal Blade	+4 Mana, Disrupt spell
7	Winged Key	Acess to level

BATMAN

THE PENGUIN'S MANSION


GROUND FLOOR
STAIRS TO THE SECOND FLOOR
PICTURE THIS
PENGUIN'S RECEPTION ROOM
LOFT
ON THE RIGHT TRACK
STAIRS TO SECOND FLOOR
SECOND FLOOR
STAIRS TO THE GROUND FLOOR
WHY LOCK IT?
STAIRS TO LOFT
STAY SHARP
OUTSIDE - 'ONLY ONE WAY TO SOLVE THIS'

While still on the subject of *Batman — The Caped Crusader*, J.Palk of Berkshire has compiled the following maps for the Penguin Game. He tells us that a map for the Joker game is not necesarry since there is only ever one route to follow.

Here is a very useful list of objects in the games, also supplied by Mr.Palk:

THE PENGUIN — 'A BIRD IN THE HAND'

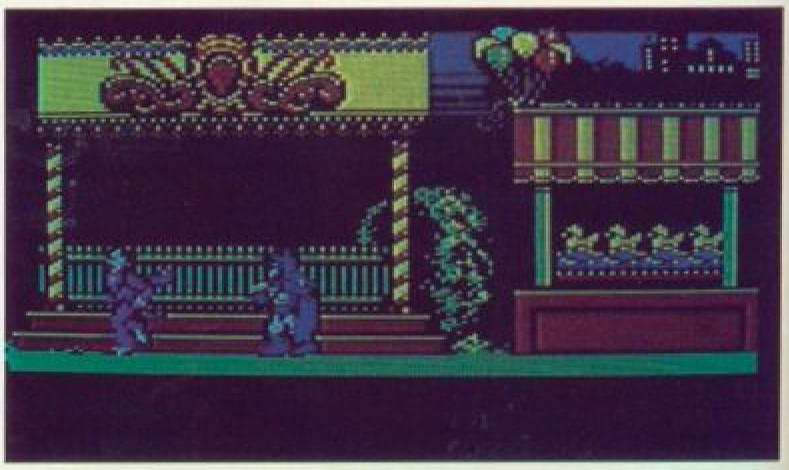
Item	Usage
Spanner	Bruce'll fix it
Game Disc	Insert the disc
Police Badge	Don't make me use this
Key (Batcave)	In a pickle
Grenade	No Pin? Oops!
Rope	Getting you down?
Torch	Black Room
Lift Key	Getting back up again
Dart	Throw at dart board
Pass Card	A clue —pass it on
Video Tape	Picyure this
Key (Mansion)	Locked door
Knife	Stay sharp
Trumpet	On the right track
Virus Disc	On the right track
Tweezers/ Magnet	Useless items Ignore

The following items recharge full strength: Bread, Canned Drink, Boiled Sweet, Fried Egg, and Banana.

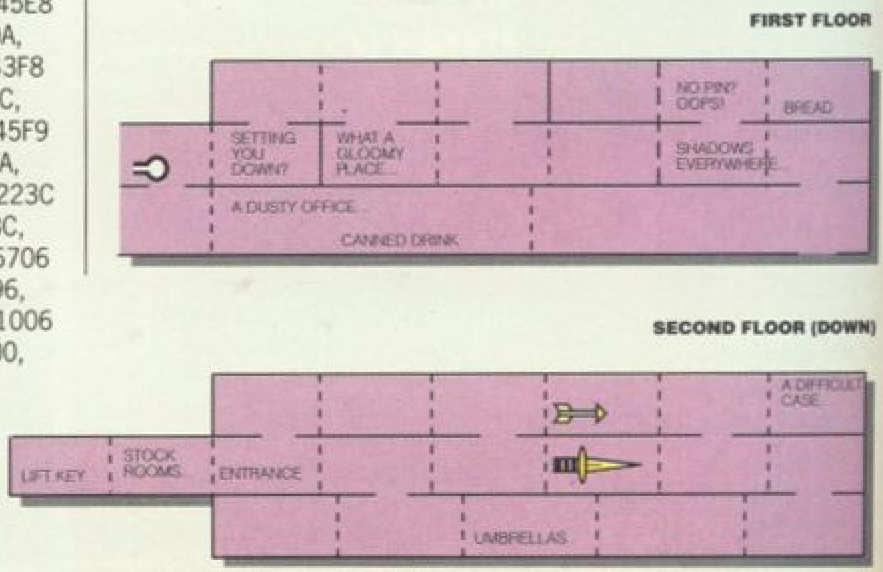
THE JOKER — 'A FETE WORSE THAN DEATH'

Item	Usage
Bulb	Black Room
Crowbar	Men at work
Torch	Second Black Room
Gasmask	It's getting smelly
False Teeth	To allow eating
Wire Cutters	To diffuse bombs
Money	Has the penny dropped
Ammo	Use with gun to load it
Gun	Open season?
Sunglasses	White Room
Handcuffs	Arrest the real Joker
Joker Card	To go through Joker door
Knife	To free Robin
Play Ears	Simply use once
Camera	then drop
Harmonica	As above
White Elephant	Useless item, ignore it

The following items recharge strength fully: Carrot, Fish, Canned Drink, Carton of Milk, Plum Duff(?), and Mouse Mousse(!)



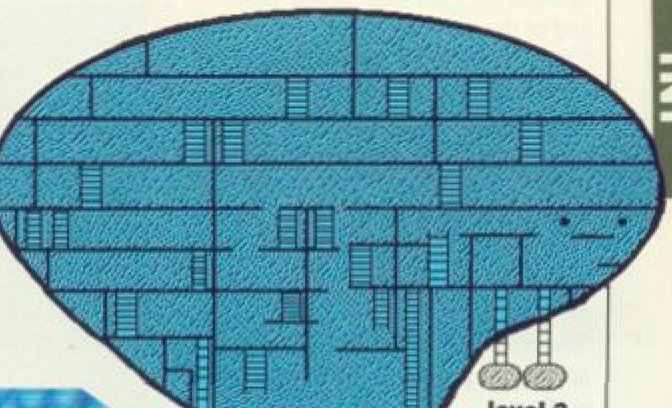
THE PENGUIN'S WAREHOUSE


FIRST FLOOR
SETTING YOU DOWN?
WHAT A GLOOMY PLACE...
A DUSTY OFFICE...
CANNED DRINK
NO PIN? OOPS!
BREAD
SHADOWS EVERYWHERE...
SECOND FLOOR (DOWN)
LIFT KEY
STOCK ROOMS
ENTRANCE
UMBRELLAS
A DIFFICULT CASE...

If the Penguin and Joker are making life just a little too difficult then this tonic for infinite lives from Mark Lawrence of Basildon should come in handy:

```
10 DIM CODE%(255)
20 FOR N=0 TO 151
30 READ A$:A=VAL("&H"+A$)
40 CODE%(N)=A
50 NEXT N
60 CHEAT=VARPTR(CODE%(0))
65 CALL CHEAT
70 REM TYPE IN THIS LISTING
AND SAVE FOR FUTURE USE
80 REM INSERT BATMAN DISK
AND RUN THE PROGRAM
90 REM GAME SHOULD LOAD AS
USUAL WITH INFINITE LIVES
100 DATA 41FA, 0014, 43F9,
0007, FE00, 2F09, 707F, 22D8
110 DATA 51C8, FFFC, 4E75,
70FF, 2C78, 0004, 4EAE, FEB6
120 DATA 2200, 5280, 6700,
00A6, 4BFA, 014E, 3AFC, 0400
130 DATA 429D, 3AC1, 93C9,
4EAE, FEDA, 2AC0, 2A8D, 2B4D
140 DATA 0008, 589D, 4295,
4BFA, 00F0, 1ABC, 0005, 3B7C
150 DATA 0030, 000A, 41ED,
0038, 2B48, 0006, 41FA, 00C0
160 DATA 7000, 7200, 43FA,
00CA, 4EAE, FE44, 4A80, 6600
170 DATA 005C, 700C, 99CC,
6118, 7002, 49F9, 0007, 0000
180 DATA 610E, 45EC, 01FE,
47FA, 0026, 613A, 4EEC, 000C
190 DATA 43FA, 00C2, 22FC,
0000, 0400, 22CC, 4299, 7230
200 DATA 93C1, 3340, 001C,
3341, 0012, 4EEE, FE38, 2057
210 DATA 217C, 5354, 4152,
06CE, 317C, 5400, 06D2, 45E8
220 DATA 01CC, 47FA, 000A,
34FC, 4EF9, 248B, 4E75, 43F8
230 DATA 0560, 2F09, 22FC,
1038, 1281, 32BC, 4E75, 45F9
240 DATA 0007, 060A, 47FA,
0004, 60DC, 4278, 00EC, 223C
250 DATA 038E, 05A2, 203C,
11FC, 0000, B0FC, 4D28, 6706
260 DATA 223C, 0374, 0596,
2180, 1000, 31BC, 303C, 1006
270 DATA 4841, 2180, 1000,
31BC, 4E71, 1006, 4ED0,
7472
280 DATA 6163, 6B64,
6973, 6B2E, 6465, 7669,
6365, 0000
```

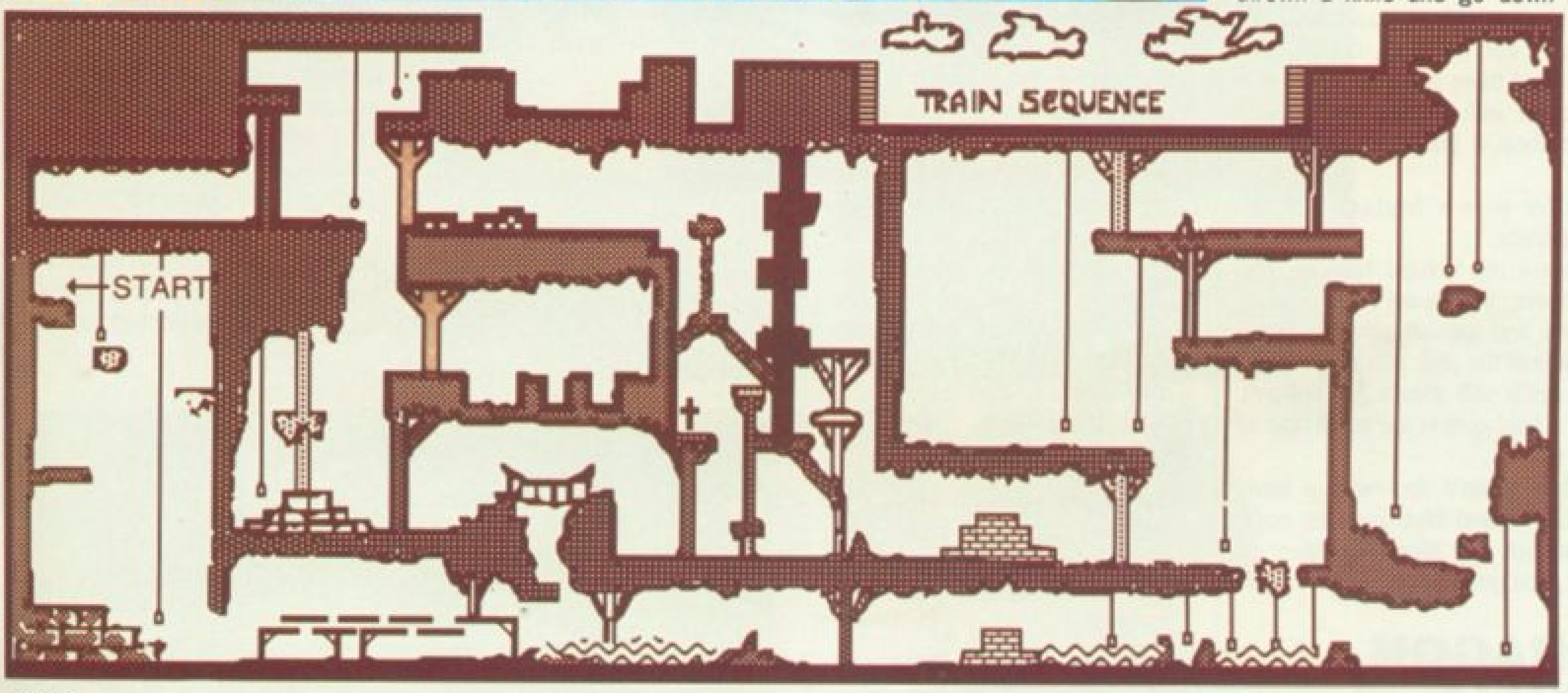
INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE



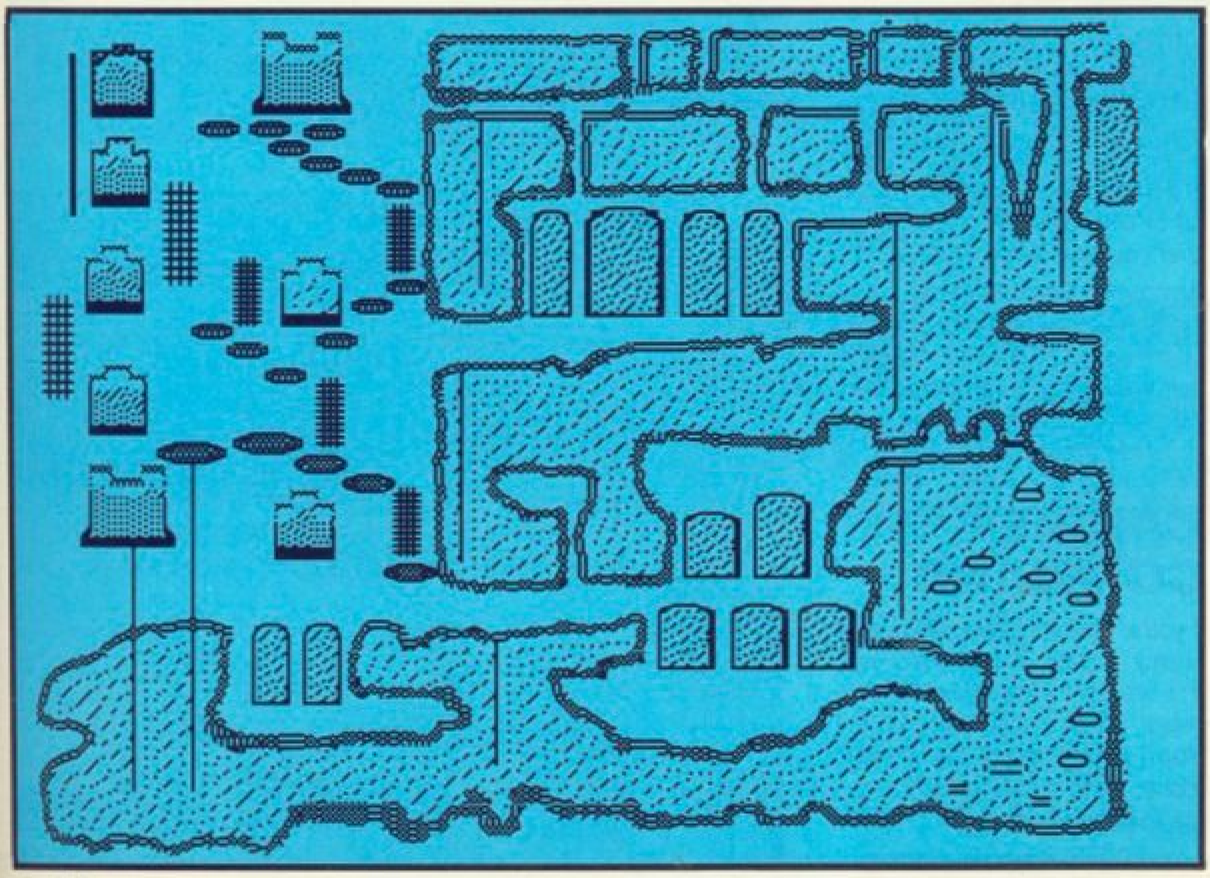
level 3

The map of US Gold's latest jaunt with old Indy was made up from those supplied by P.J.Gregg of Chipstead and Richard Davis, London. P.J.Gregg also provides a few tips for completing the first level:

Go down the rope slowly. At the end of it, jump to the other rope quickly. Wait until the man has thrown a knife and go down the rope quickly. When you are at the bottom, go right. Wait for a piece of rock to fall and then jump up the rope. Walk along the platforms and get the torch. Now go back and drop down onto the whip. Kneel down until the gunman has stopped firing and then whip him quickly. Go right until you reach the two gunmen. Kneel down until they turn around and then jump over the barrels. Now follow them and when they turn around, whip them. When jumping onto ropes, go to the bottom of the rope before you jump or you will die. Jump off at the end and whip the man. Wait before climbing the rope because of rock falls. Take one torch and climb the rope. Stay on the rope until the nearest man has just gone up. Jump across and wait. Jump onto the second rope and follow the man up until you see the first man go down. Jump across, climb up the first rope and jump into the siding.



level 1



level 2

run into the passage at the other end of the corridor.

"Don't let a closed door stop you": Chop it down in other words.

"None shall pass": Unless you have a falchion, chop this down too.

"Cast thy influence, cast thy might": Use the 20 spell to open the door, then throw an item across the pit.

"When is rock not rock": When it is an illusion a pace to the left (The wall).

"This wall says nothing": Not much anyway.

"This is my prisoner, let him suffer": Don't take orders. Throw something you don't need at him, or is it her?

"You will regret that": Not if you want to go on to the next level.

"Short Cut": Put a gold key in the lock and a transporter will appear. Make worms follow you to it. Go in and wait a few seconds, then go in again. You should land on them. If not, try again. On the second level there is a door you need to open with a gold key. Don't. Just chop it down and keep the key.

"Lighter than a feather": Air! No Corbamite.

"Beware my twisted humour, the deceiver, the snake": Become a snake and go left until the end, right until the end, and so on.

"In death still thirsts for bullion": Put a gold coin in the small hole in the wall.

"Riddle room": You need a bow, gold coin,and blue gem to open gate, but with Mirror of Dawn as well, you get a prize.

DRAGON NINJA

Mark Russel from Southport explains how to dispatch your opponents:

***Samurai Warriors*:**

Run under them as they are in mid-air. As they land, perform a back kick.

***Crawling Ninjas*:**

Armed — weapon down-right, left.

Unarmed — Kick down-right, left.

***Guard Dog*:**

As for 'Crawling Ninja'

***Grey Ninja*:**

Drop to lower level or super jump to higher level just before he starts to throw the stars/mines.

***Fat Fire-Breather*:**

Armed — Just keep striking him.

Unarmed — Super punch and spinning kick.

***Second Level Guardian*:**

Super Punch. Keep standing on hub of the truck.

***Green Multiplying Ninja*:**

The spinning kick and Super Punch are the quickest way to get rid of him. When he tries to jump over you, give him a mid-kick.

***Armoured Giant Ninja*:**

Armed — Keep hitting him.

Unarmed — Super Punch. Position yourself right in front of him. When he does his super kick, jump into the air.

CARRIER COMMAND

If you're having trouble taking over enemy islands or occupying neutral islands then try this. When in range of an island turn to the map. Zoom in on the present island. Now, simply press F8 and the island is yours!

(Duncan Harris, Halstead)

Rampage on the Sega

CONSOLE CORNER

DOUBLE DRAGON — SEGA

For infinite lives on a one player game, play through to level four, then move directly up to a doorway. Move to the centre of the door and do leaping reverse kicks until PUSH START appears for Player 2. You will now have infinite lives. If you are playing a two player game then kill player 2 off at the end of level 3 and then follow the same procedure. Both players will now have infinite lives. (Daniel Elzein, London)

RAMPAGE - SEGA

When the GAME OVER sign appears push both buttons and you can continue. This will work up to three times. (Paul Eales, Neath)

ALTERED BEAST - SEGA

If you think three energy squares is not much to start with then push diagonally up-left simultaneously with button 1. You will now begin with five energy squares. (Paul Eales)

GRADIUS — NINTENDO

Pause the game and press up twice, down twice, left, right, left, right, and unpause the game for nearly all the weapons. (Guamtom Lee, London)

DRUNKEN MASTER — PC ENGINE

Turn the machine on, then off, then on again. Hold down the RUN and SELECT buttons. Next release the RUN button and push UP once. Now release the SELECT button and push UP three times, RIGHT six times, DOWN twice, and LEFT three times. Choose the stage and make yourself invincible. You will be returned to the title screen. (Guatom Lee)

GHOST HOUSE — SEGA

To gain points for extra men quickly, jump on about 15 arrows on a screen, then everything will turn yellow. You can now walk through everything, getting 1000 points for arrows, daggers, and mummies. On screen 2, always try to jump on a dagger before tackling Dracula. (Steven Lowly, Doncaster)

Altered Beast on the Sega

YOUR NAME IN LIGHTS?

Do you often buy supposedly difficult games, finish them within hours, and then wonder what all the fuss is about? Can you crack and hack even the most secure new releases quickly? Are you capable of mapping games clearly and producing sound tips for novice players? If the answer to any or all of these questions is yes, then you may well be the sort of person we're looking for. We plan to set up a team of hot games crackers to produce the best tricks, tips, and cheats available anywhere. If you are prepared to contribute regularly (for a tidy reward of course) and think that you can come up with the goods, then send samples of your work to:

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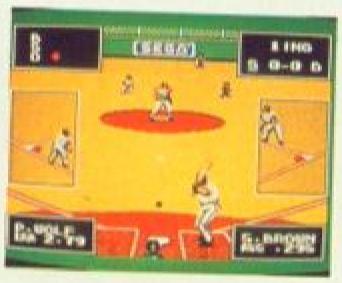
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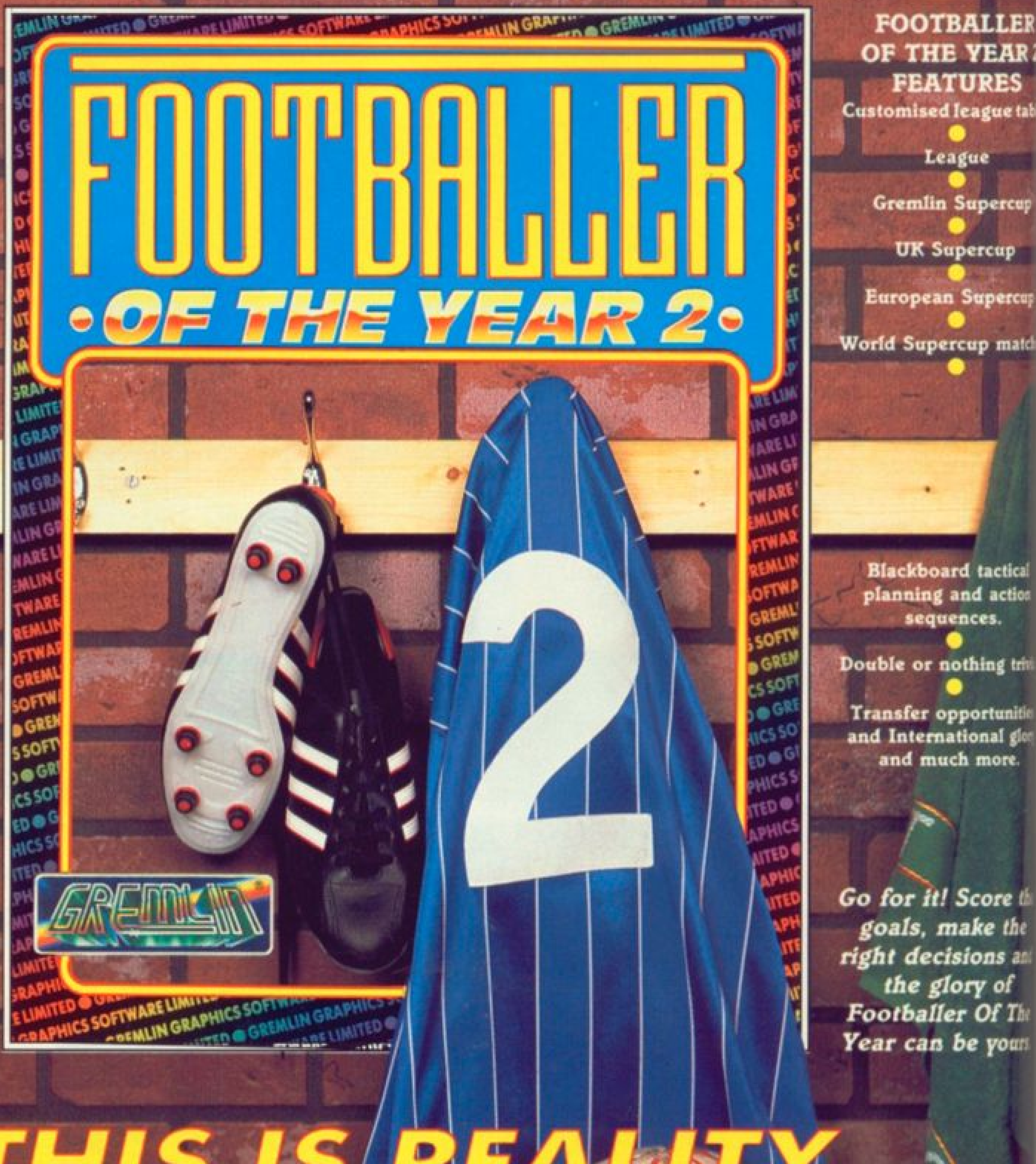
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BLASTS FROM THE PAST

BLASTS FROM THE PAST BREAK OUT ON BUDGET...

If you've missed out on some of the great all-time hits of yesteryear, now's your chance to pick them up at knock-down prices as software houses continue to release chartbusting games on budget labels. Here's this month's guide to unmissable bargains...plus the addresses to order from if you have difficulty finding them in your local corner shop...

With the price of beer rocketing our Pint At a Glance Guide to budget games has never been more invaluable. You can now buy a budget 8-bit cassette for the same price as two pints of Tennants Extra at the ACE teams favourite watering hole (City Pride, Farringdon Lane). What's more, six pints of Tennants Extra will net you a 16 bit disk now that the new wave of budget Amiga and ST titles are beginning to appear.

Of particular interest this month are Crystal Castles, World Class Leader Board, Football Manager, Paperboy, and Yie Ar Kung Fu – all for the price of a pint or two...

SOLDIER OF LIGHT

Rad £2.99
Spectrum, Amstrad, C64

Scrolling shoot 'em up in the *Forgotten Worlds*, *Crosswize* mould. Lots of power ups, the odd bit of platform leaping, and particularly vicious end of level nasties make SOL an OK – but far from exceptional – shoot 'em up.

All 8 bit versions reached a competent level in both graphics and sound.

A well known, if slightly over rated coin-op conversion in its day. Good buy for those determined to have every coin-op that ever bleeped in their collection.

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JACK THE NIPPER

Kixx £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Jack the Nipper gave to computer gaming one of its most treasured gameplay devices – the 'Naughtyometer'. Every time Jack got up to a piece of mischief like frightening the cat, smashing plates, or taking pot shots at people with his pea shooter so his 'Naughtyometer' would go up. The nappy-clad Jack makes for an amusing multi level challenge. Puzzles of medium difficulty level and lots of laughs.

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WORLD CLASS LEADER BOARD

Klassix £9.99
ST

The classic golf game from Access has undergone an almost constant process of upgrading, tweaking, and development of new courses. *World Class Leaderboard* was one of the later versions and has therefore benefited from these improvements. It offers a 3D view of the course with excellent graphical representation of trees, bunkers, water, and the green. The player can select from a range of clubs, make adjustments to allow for wind conditions and set the power of the shot by using the barometer to the right of the play window. Across a range of machines the Leader Board titles have the edge on the competition. At a less than a tenner this is an excellent purchase for your ST.

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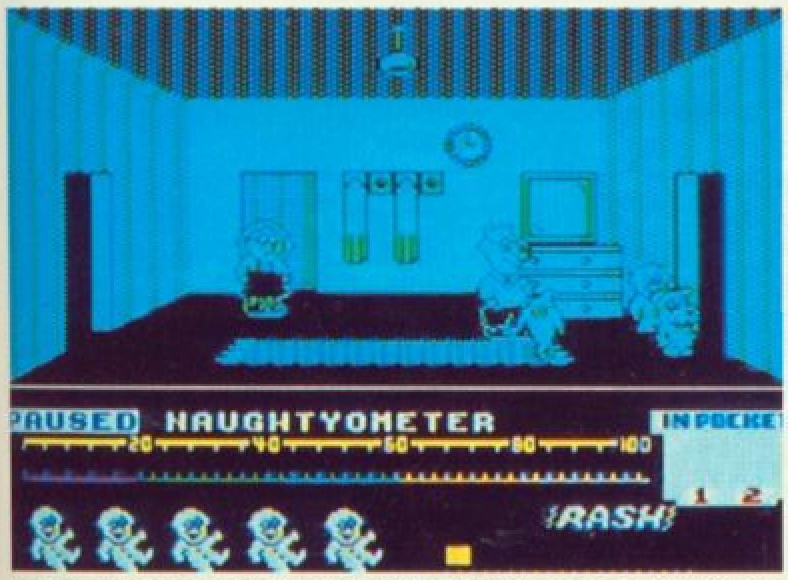
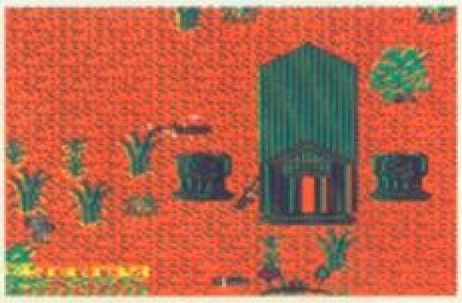
RAMBO

Hit Squad £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Jack's 'Naughtyometer' rating will soar if he can do something bad with that rug.



Stallone looks wimpy in Spectrum graphics.

This was Ocean's biggie for Christmas '86. A four directional scrolling shoot 'em up pinned on the fame of the Stallone commando movie hero,but owing a major debt to the Capcom coin-op – *Commando*.

More hostage to be rescued behind enemy lines – but this time the player needs eyes in the back of his head as the enemy troops come at you from all directions. A variety of weapons are at your disposal including grenades, bazookas, and an army knife. Later in the game you have to find the chopper and ferry our more hostages. Graphics based on a Vietnam scenario as per the film are coded to a high standard on all 8-bit machines. Tough shoot 'em up with a fair degree of planning and strategy required to be successful.

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720

Kixx £2.99
Spectrum, Amstrad, C64

This Atari coin-op really turned heads when it showed up in the arcades in the Summer Of '87. It looked like the trendiest thing you ever saw with its skate boarding hero clad in multi coloured Bermudas, quiffed hair cut, and loud surf-punk music pumping out of the cabinet. US Gold were straight in for the home rights and it turned up at Christmas of the same year.

Unfortunately, the gameplay never really lived up to its splendid graphics and basic game idea. This was not USG's fault. They made a good job of most of the 8-bit conversions (C64 was the best, Spectrum and Amstrad just competent).

The aim is to successfully negotiate the four skateparks – winning points and prizes. Skating between challenges can be hazardous as the Buicks, bikers, and body builders that also inhabit the streets are not at all keen on skate boarders. A must for skate board stylists.

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FOOTBALL MANAGER

Prism £5.99
ST, Amiga

Prism could well cause a storm in the games business by pricing their classic football management game at £5.99. This could be good news if other companies follow suit. FM is the standard management soccer game. Pick your team, study form, check the league positions, – its all there as you become Cloughie for an afternoon. Highly recommended.

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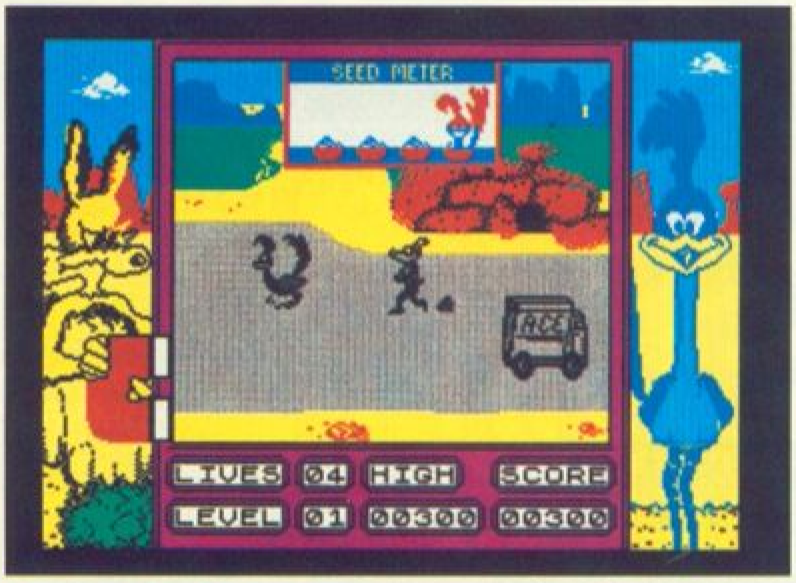

ROAD RUNNER

Encore £2.99
C64, Spec, Amstrad

This Atari coin-op gobbled stacks of coins when it appeared in the arcades early in 1987. It made the strange decision to cast the games player as the Road Runner rather that Wile E Coyote – the hapless hero of the cartoons who never quite manages to catch that darned bird. The aim is to put as much distance between you (Road Runner) and Wile E as possible.

All of the frills of the coin-op are here – the puff off smoke at Road Runner's feet as he hops on the jet powered skate board, for example. There is also the pogo stick escape route and the various bits of grain to be gobbled up by the bird as he moves. A simple but amusing conversion of the Atari coin-op. Good fun – even if you only get a few days challenge out of it.

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BATTY

Encore £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Batty is an Arkanoid clone. Bounce your balls off the tiles to take them out one by one. Various power-ups can be caught to enable you to do this faster. Dozens of this type of game were launched about three years ago as the software industry demonstrated its traditional lack of originality. Still – the games are hugely addictive and *Batty* is as good a rendition of the genre as you are likely to see.

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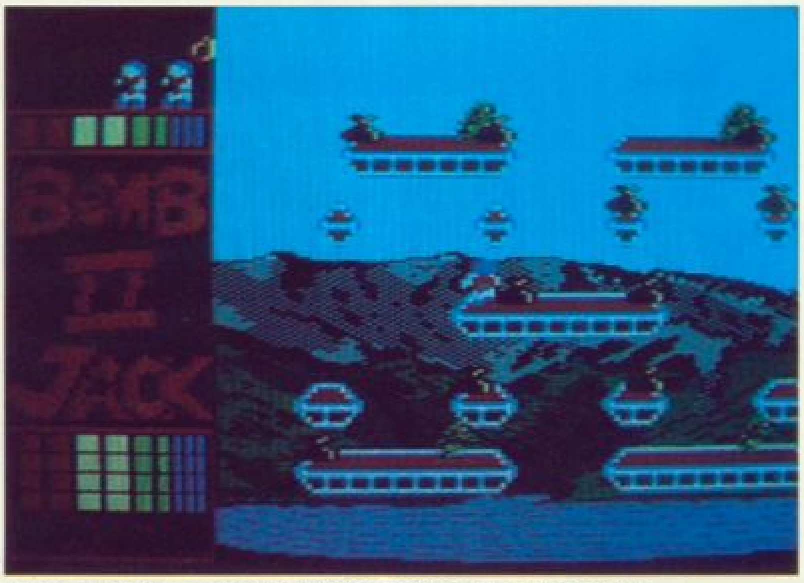
GREEN BERET

Hit Squad £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Cute platform capers in the Bubble Bobble tradition.

One of the first military shoot 'em ups and a monster hit in the arcades when launched by Taito way back in 1985. Ocean cleaned up with the home conversions in Summer '86 and now they offer you a second attempt to rescue the hostages at £2.99.

Deep behind enemy lines six hostages are roped to stakes about to face the firing squad. You are one of the green beret commandos sent in to rescue them. Dash left to right taking out the Russians as impressive back drops of a naval base, aircraft base, missile base, and giant army rocket launchers and tanks scroll past.

Intelligently thought out shoot 'em up with excellent graphics and implelemented on all 8-bit systems.

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YIE AR KUNG FU

Hi Squad £2.99
Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

A classic Konami beat 'em up that earned Ocean a chart topping position in the Spring of '86. You are the brave contender Oolong who must kick the @*7t out of ten opponents in your quest to become the Kung Fu Master. Two impressive backdrops – an oriental temple and a water fall provide the setting for the scraps. The opponents have differing abilities and weapons such a Stars and Nunchaku so it is essential to master the variety of different kicks, punches, leaps available to you in *Yie Ar*. There are sixteen possible moves in two modes which puts *Yie Ar Kung Fu* a notch or two above the multitude of beat 'em ups that have been launched over the years. Again, all 8 bit titles were converted to a good standard.

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BOMBJACK II

Encore £2.99
C64,Spec, Amstrad

Elite had high hopes for this sequel to the Taito platform classic in Spring '87. Although the game play never really matched that of its stable mate *Bubble Bobble*, it was a good , addictive , platform challenge nonetheless. The cute character from the original game is not quite so cute in this sequel as he comes armed with a knife to deal with his adversaries. The display has a semi-3D effect as BJ leaps onto the screen as he explores his platforms. These are scattered with treasure which BJ must collect – being careful to avoid the mutated dinosaurs who would prefer to keep the treasure themselves. Not in the first division with *Bubble Bobble* but in the same league.

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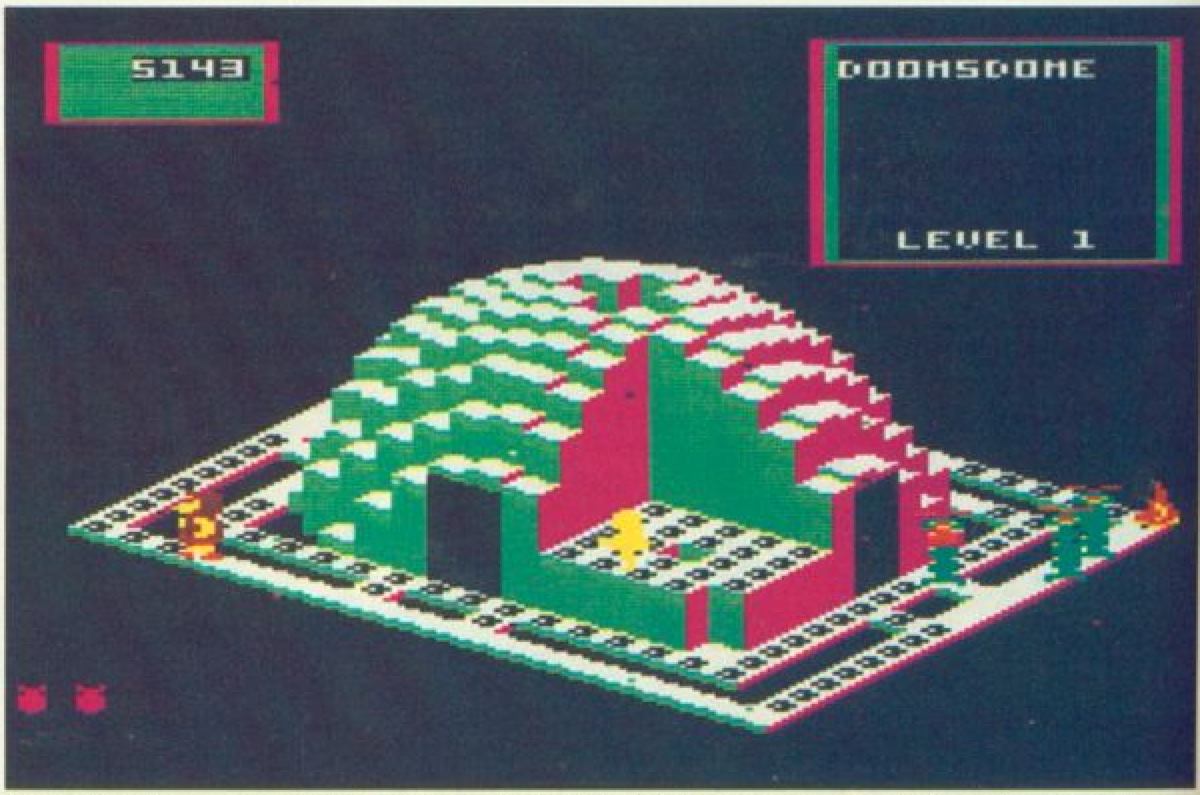
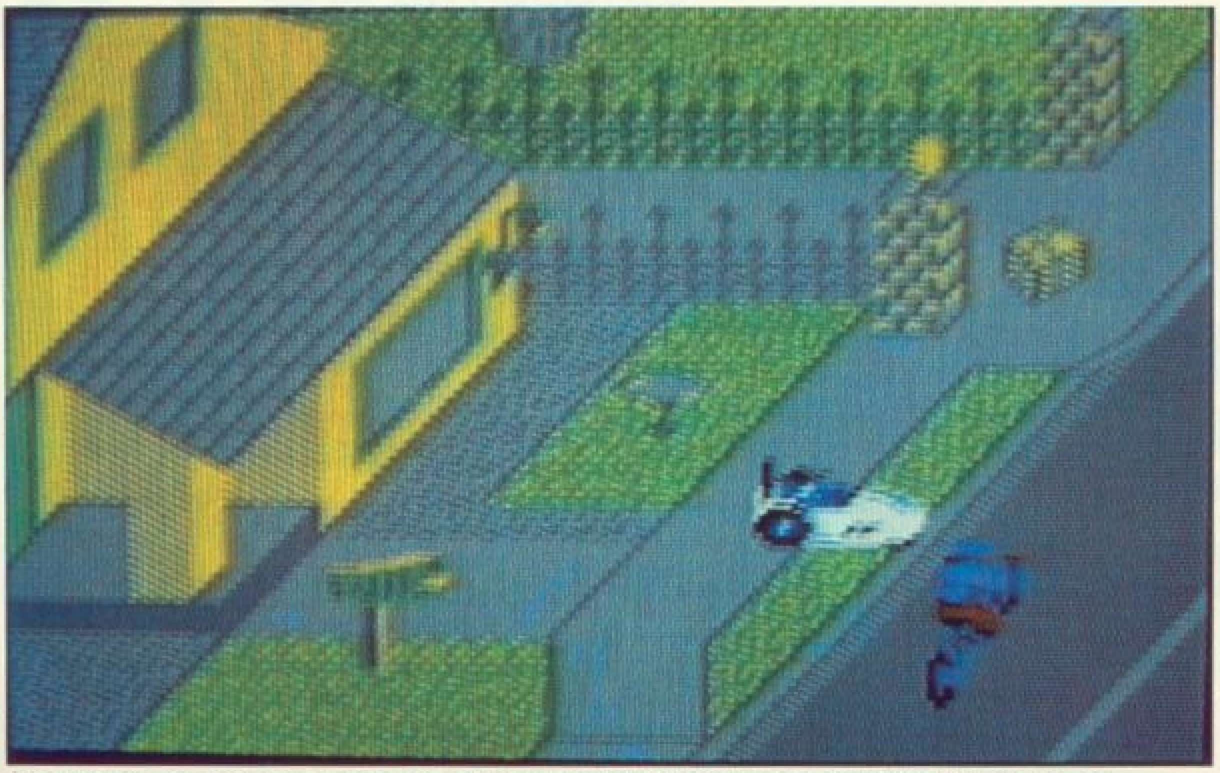
CRYSTAL CASTLES

Kixx £2.99
Amstrad, C64, Spectrum



Crystal Castles — a classic 3D style Pacman with secret passages and a wicked witch in pusuit.



A bonus pile of newspapers are up for grabs if our delivery boy can avoid the Kamikaze C5.

Another cult coin-op classic is about to sneak out on budget, and luckily for you if you missed it the first time – highly likely as its launch at full price three years ago was a strangely low key affair. Strange when you consider that this 3D *Pacman* style game was one of the most addictive cabinets ever to stand in an arcade. You play the part of Bentley the Bear who must gather all of the gems dotted around the floor of eighteen ice structures. Each level must be completely clear before progressing to the next and Bentley must make use of the lifts, pulleys, ramps and hidden passages if he is to succeed. The skeletons, bees, Gem Eaters and Berthilda the witch are keen to hang on to the gems. Ultimately pointless yet totally unputdownable arcade entertainment.

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MONTY ON THE RUN

Kixx £2.99

Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Up there with the best of platform games produced for the home systems. Monty has two main strengths – humour in abundance and a brilliant 'Loony Tunes' style sound track. The aim of the game is get the recently escaped from Scudmore prison Monty safely out of the country on a channel tunnel before the cops catch up with him. Various items have to be collected and used if Monty is to succeed. The puzzles are intricate yet the game plays with great speed. All-time platform classic.

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PAPERBOY

Encore £2.99

Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

This Atari coin-op became Elite's biggest ever hit in the Winter of '86 and is software proof of the fact that a paperboy's job is a tough one. Hop on your chopper bike fitted with a basket and get those papers delivered. If this sounds tame, bear in mind that in the States it is acceptable for paperboys to sling the papers into the porches without dismounting. This speeds things up a bit but it's still no pushover with hazards that include cars, workmen, drunkards, and kamikaze lawnmowers out to cripple you. Bonus points can be earned by lobbing the papers through the windows of non-subscribers. Maybe ACE should try this. Several levels,and extremely well executed graphics on 8-bit formats make for a budget classic worth two pints of anyone's money.

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ARCADE FLIGHT SIMULATOR

Codemasters £2.99

C64

Arcade Flight Simulator from Codemasters is a lot heavier on the arcade than on the simulator. Don't expect anything akin to *Falcon* in this one. Having said that it does have a bit more to it than simply flying around the screen blasting the enemy. You have to refuel, check your ammo,and drop bombs on enemy targets. As you progress through the levels there are more targets to be taken out. Some neat aerial combat scenes make for a moderately amusing game.

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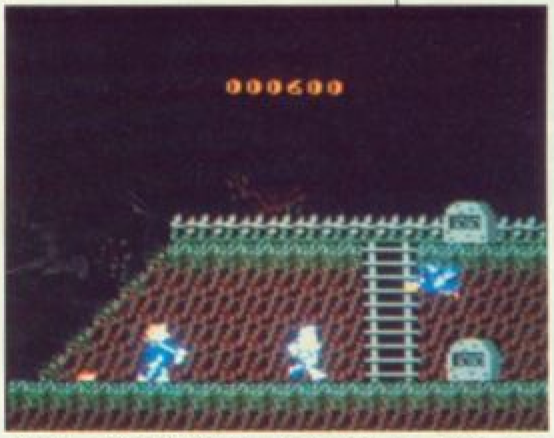
GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Encore £2.99

Spectrum, C64, Amstrad



Arms outstretched, the living dead are everywhere after the Ghosts and Gobs' knight — in his quest to rescue the princess

Ghosts and Goblins was one of the first really huge arcade adventures to appear in the arcades. It was so big, and so tough that you had to pump pockets full of change into it to get anywhere. For this reason most people believed the Capcom title would convert well to home use.

Which indeed it did. You play a Knight in shining armour sent on a mission to rescue a princess. Scrolling horizontally you have to waste the various ghosts, ghouls, and living dead who emerge from their graves to thwart your quest. Well decorated with Magazine accolades when it was launched in Winter '86 and, in 1989, a solid budget purchase.

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MIG 29 – SOVIET FIGHTER.

Codemasters £2.99

Spectrum, C64, Amstrad

Codemasters. choice of aircraft for this arcade game is very clever. NATO rate the Russian jet as the best fighter to emerge from their designers ever. Although the USAF will not admit it, informed sources think it is a match for the F16 Falcon.

Unfortunately you cannot get much of an idea of what the plane is like as it appears very small on screen. and there is no manual al all. Gameplay makes up for it though, being *Defender*-like as you pick up parachutes for bonus points. Not a real simulator – but it still has lots of dials to be watched – fuel, distance, wapons, to name but three. Best of all though, this is your turn to be the enemy.

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ALIEN SYNDROME

Rad £9.99

Atari ST, Amiga

This Sega coin-op gathered a cult following in the arcades in 1987. Its ugly end of level nasties made up of what looked like a mass of giant bulls' eyes could really make you chuck if you happened to wander into your local arcade after a greasy kebab. It's a four directional scroller with an over-head perspective – *in the* style of *Gauntlet*.

The aim of the game is to rescue your colleagues whom the aliens have caged in tiny cells along the walls of each level. As you set about doing this you will also have to waste the aliens who are determined to hang on to their captives.

By comparison with the latest coin-ops for 16-bit machines *Alien Syndrome* now looks very basic. Graphically the 16-bit versions compared favourably to the coin-op original. Fine for a while but lacking in long term appeal.

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NINTENDO UPDATE

Whatever the attractions of the new 16-bit consoles, Nintendo owners can still take comfort from some of the best gameplay on offer.

Nintendo are emerging as the IBM of computer games. With a virtual monopoly of the games scene in America and Japan and a rapidly growing empire in Europe, their power is awesome. In recent years this power has been used to tie up exclusive rights to almost every major coin-op licence going. Big name Japanese companies like SNK, Taito, Capcom, and Jaleco have all signed deals with Nintendo. This is good news for Nintendo owners - but bad news if you own anything else, as Nintendo will be able to use their muscle to block the launch of these games on any other system.

Here are four of the latest offerings, including a real gem: *Tetris*, running on the Gameboy hand-held. Playing *Tetris* on the train with headphones on is an experience worth paying a lot of dosh for...

IKARI WARRIORS

Two player warfare in the jungle

SNK's *Ikari Warriors* is typical of the new wave of titles. You won't see it on the PC Engine, Sega, or any other console. It's a two player shoot 'em up where you and a chum are 'Paul and Vince with secret orders to invade an enemy nation'.

The game scrolls in four directions - *Commando*-style as hordes of enemy troops come at you. Stacks of power ups are up for grabs to help the dynamic duo in their manoeuvres. There are grenades which you will need to take out the pill boxes, tanks, gates and choppers.

Team work is the key to success in *Ikari Warriors*. You need to advance in planned stages - protecting each other as you advance up screen. Tricky situations can be avoided by picking up 'K' power ups. These act as smart bombs - wiping out everything on screen.

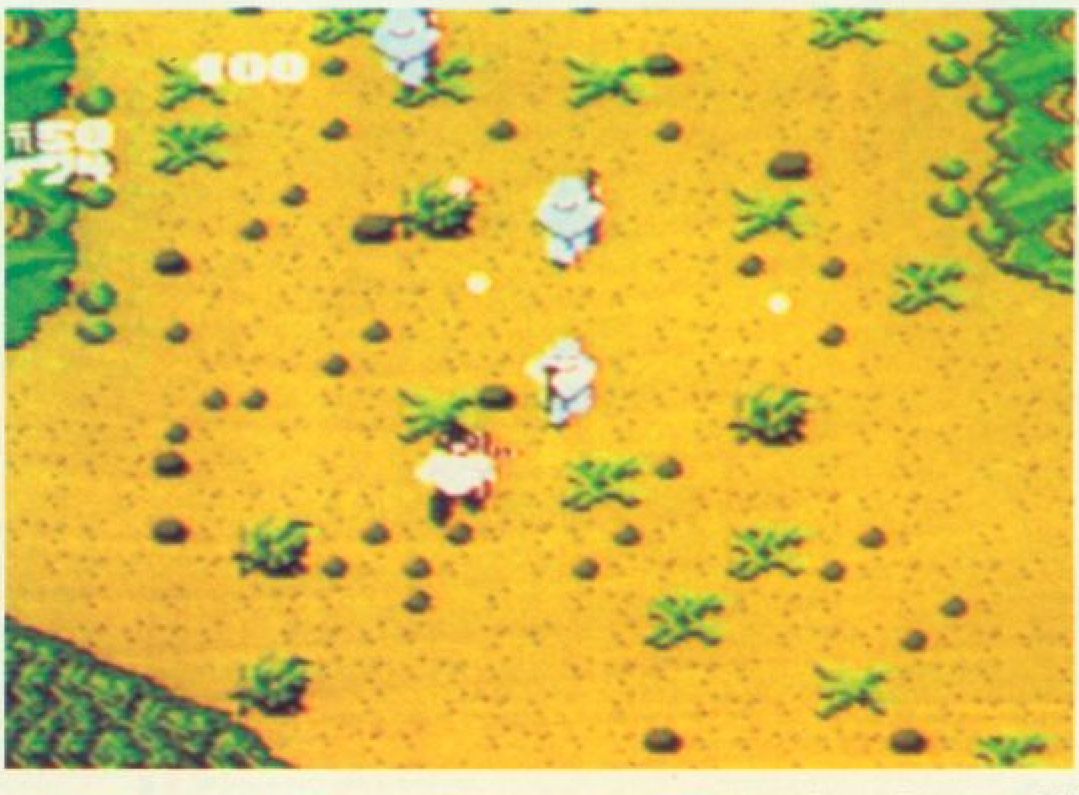
Graphics are convincing - particularly the opening screen which shows Paul and Vince's plane crashing into thick jungle foliage. The over head view of the game itself is characterised by desert, jungle and rivers - with the enemy emerging from native huts, and fortresses.

As a shoot 'em up *Ikari Warriors* isn't going to win any awards. The game play seems a bit dated - particularly in the way the power ups work. You don't have any control over them as you do - say in *R-Type*. The conversion has the speed of the arcade original but is slightly let down by vast difference in graphics.

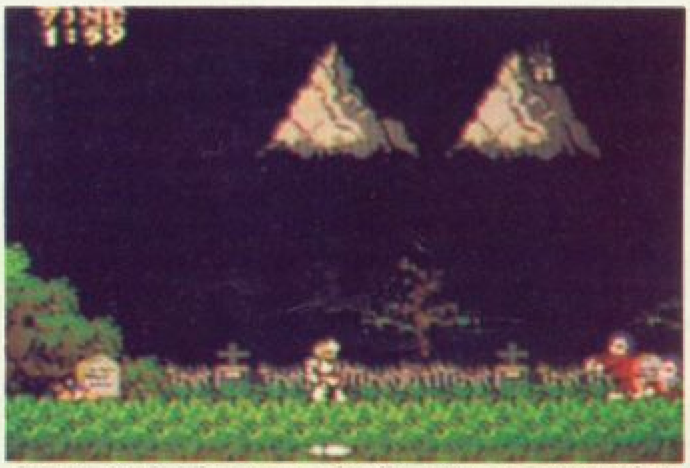
If you liked the coin-op go for it. But make sure you have *Gradius* in your collection before you buy Ikari or any other Nintendo shoot 'em up.

£29.99 on cartridge.

***Verdict:* Simple shoot 'em up with little lasting appeal.**



The arcade hit comes to Nintendo, but will it prove as popular?



Ghosts N' Goblins was quite literally a monster hit in the arcades. Now a haunting experience on the Nintendo.

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Spooky goings on in Nintendo land

This classic Capcom coin-op provided a tough challenge for gamers when it hit the arcades in the Summer of '86. You had to pump pounds worth of coins into it to explore its seemingly endless fairy tale world. Thankfully, its conversion to play at home gives you a more realistic chance of cracking it.

You are cast as a Knight in Shining armour (Well eventually - when you find the armour that is) who has to rescue the beautiful princess locked (yawn) in a castle (yawn) by the devil - Zzzzzz.

Wake up! It may be a corny plot but it's cute, addictive and good fun.

There are seven levels to be explored before you come face to face with the Devil - beyond the seventh gate. Various weapons need to be picked up and used if your knight is to defeat the various ghouls, ghosts, living dead and Zombies that the devil brings into combat against your Knight.

Your weapons are Torches, Swords, Axes, Crosses, and Javelins. Tooling up is essential when you confront the end of level demon. You destroy him to win a key to the next level.

The success of the coin-op was largely to do with the fairy tale appeal of the graphics. The castles , churches and graveyards were so convincing that it was easy to lose yourself in the atmosphere of the game. The Nintendo struggles to emulate this world - with very glitchy graphics. The game play still manages to provide a tough challenge that is going to take some time to complete.

Lots of hidden characters and pitfalls will be discovered as you play the game - like a Magician who has an annoying habit of turning you into a frog, and the Red Devil who seems invincible.

The trouble with the Nintendo is that, despite it having a library of coin-op conversions far larger than any other console or computer, the machine lacks the graphical power to emulate them effectively. This is not a problem in some of the excellent original Nintendo titles like the *Mario* series - where the games have been designed within the framework of the NES's capabilities. But in games like *Ghosts and Goblins* it is really stretched. Having said that - it is still recommended to fans of the coin-op. All of the game play is there.

£29.99 on cartridge

***Verdict*: Arcade adventure that you won't want to put down until you have rescued the princess.**

RUSH 'N ATTACK

Kill Russkies and save yer chums

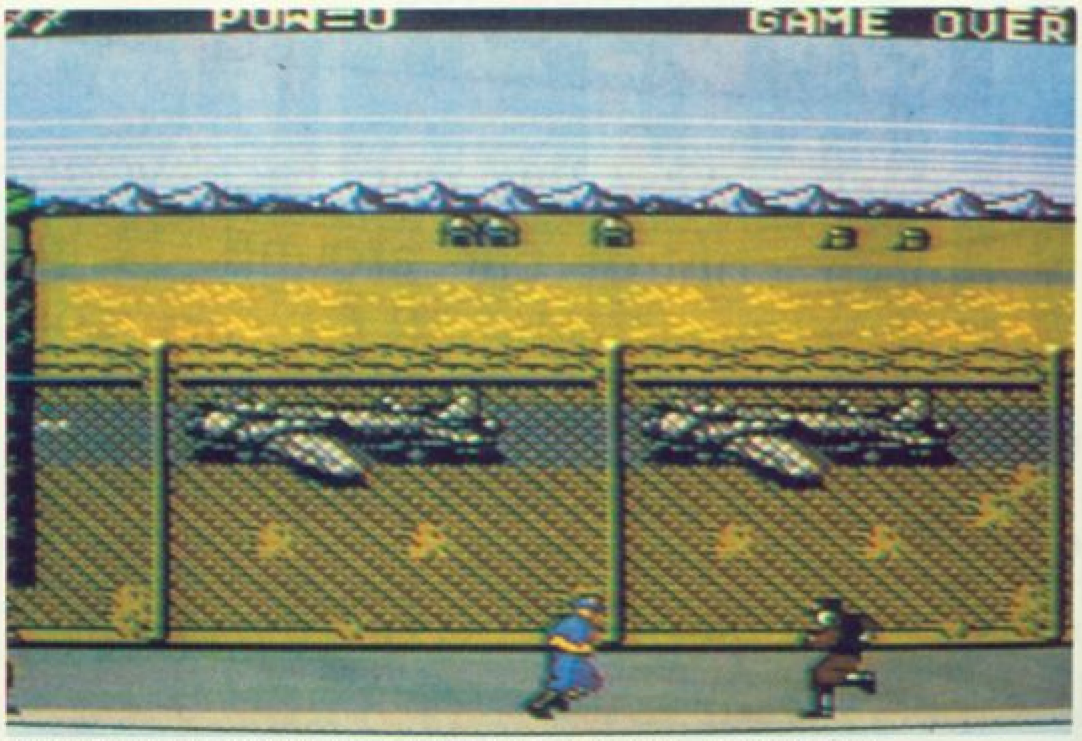
Rush 'N Attack will be more familiar to most gamers as *Green Beret* – which was what the game was called in the UK. The *Rush'N Attack* title was the American name for the game. For reasons best known to Nintendo they have decided to market the game under its American handle in the UK.

If you are now totally confused let me remind you of the scrolling shoot'em up with the impressive military backdrops of a naval base, a missile base, army barracks, and air force base.

The aim of the game is to rescue the hostages that are lashed to a post awaiting the firing squad. As you dash from left to right the enemy solderis come at you in waves. Armed with a commando knife you will also need to pick up a shoulder mounted bazooka if you are to progress to the next level.

The secret of the game is timing. Leap, stab, and run at just the right moment to kill the enemy and get on to the next strategic point in the game.

Green Beret/Rush'N Attack is everything you could ask for in a 'legging it' shoot 'em up. Its nice the way you can go up a bit - climbing onto tanks or planes, without degenerating into a total platform exercise.



***Green Beret*, an 8-bit hit now on Nintendo. Same game — different title!**

Best thing of all about it though is its endgame sequence - assuming that you are macho enough to get there. And no, ACE is not going to describe it for you just so you can brag that you did it all on 'yer tod.

£29.99 on cartridge

***Verdict:* Good, tough arcade conversion that doesn't suffer at all from NES's naff graphics.**

TETRIS

The hand held standard

OK, so the Atari Lynx hand held may have a full colour LCD display. It may have a processor that moves faster than an Amiga. It may also have software like *California Games* and stacks of other 'quality' American games waiting in the wings- but I would trade all of these for just one go on Game Boy *Tetris.*

If ever there was a computer game argument for Glasnost *Tetris* has to be it. Designed by a team of Moscow University students the game takes *Space Invaders*, turns it inside out, adds a geometrical jigsaw puzzle challenge with a time factor element thrown in.

You get just one go. The aim is to place the squares, oblongs, 'L' shapes, rods, and single cubes together in such a way that they form a solid horizontal line. Using your game controller (the same as a Sega or Nintendo four directional pad) you can rotate the shapes to find the best position for them to fit the puzzle.

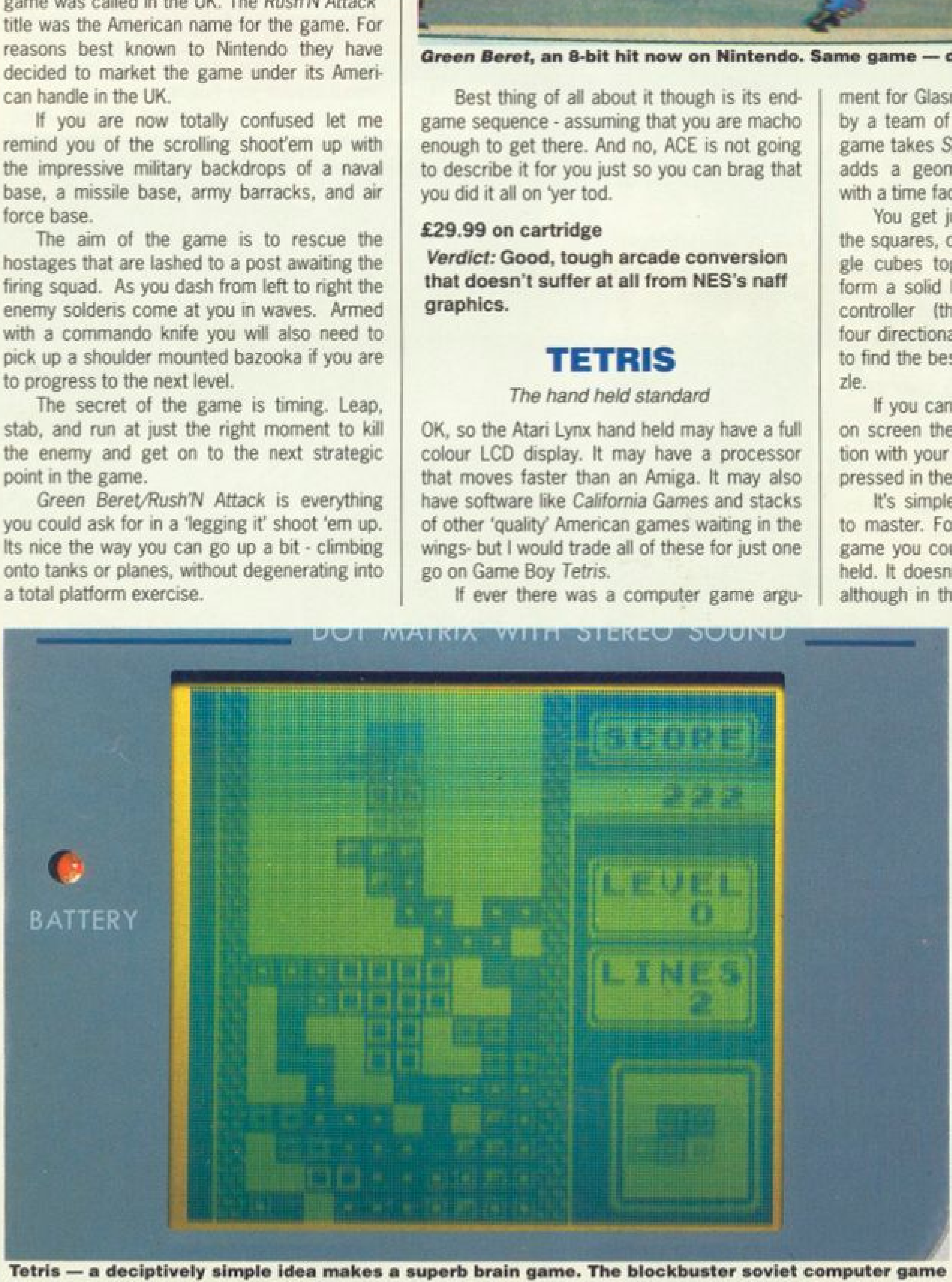
If you can suss it the second they appear on screen then you can whizz them into position with your controller by keeping your finger pressed in the direction you think it will fit.

It's simple to learn, yet extremely difficult to master. For this very reason it is the best game you could think of to convert to a hand held. It doesn't need flash graphics or sound - although in the sound department it performs pretty well on the Game Boy in full stereo through Walkman-style head phones.

The beauty of *Tetris* as a hand held game is it gives a purpose to the seemingly pointless pursuit of computer game high scores. Everyone wants to kill time occasionally - on a train, a bus, or even in a Cornish hovel without running water to make a hi-tech break from a heavy weekend of transcendental meditation. *Tetris* is so totally absorbing, addictive, and easy to get into that it achieves this far better than anything else that currently exists in the growing library of portable computer entertainment. It is, in fact, a meditation in itself.

£26.99 on cartridge

***Verdict*: A game to last a lifetime. It is to silicon what Chess is to cardboard and wood.**



Tetris — a deciptively simple idea makes a superb brain game. The blockbuster soviet computer game is now available for the Gameboy!

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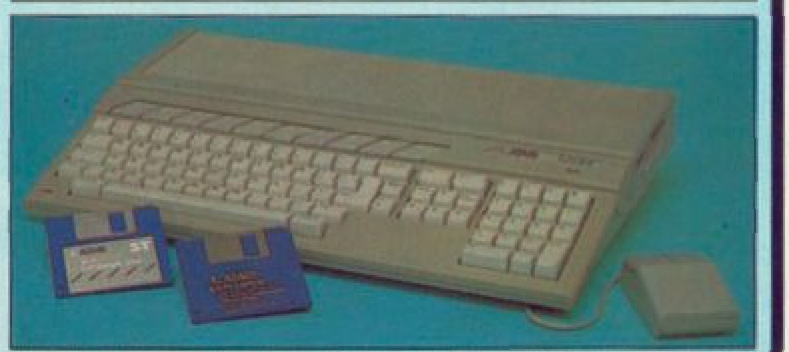

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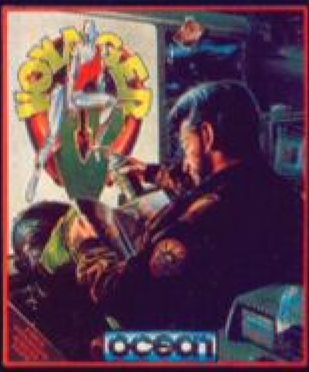

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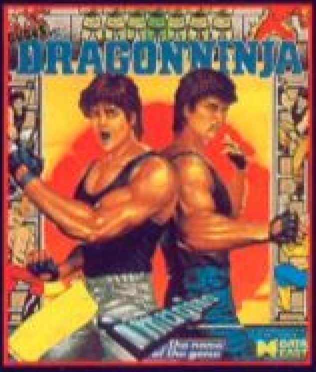

"Dragonninja is fun to play . . . well implemented and extremely addictive."
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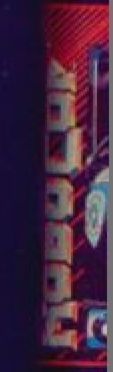

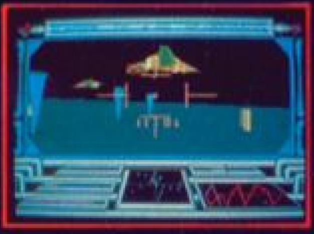

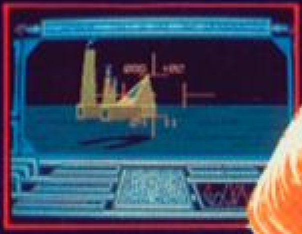

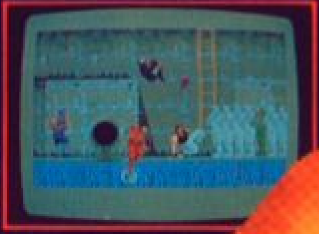

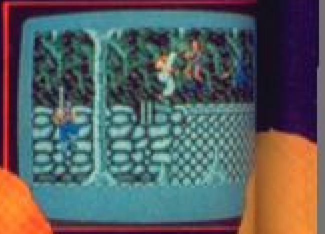

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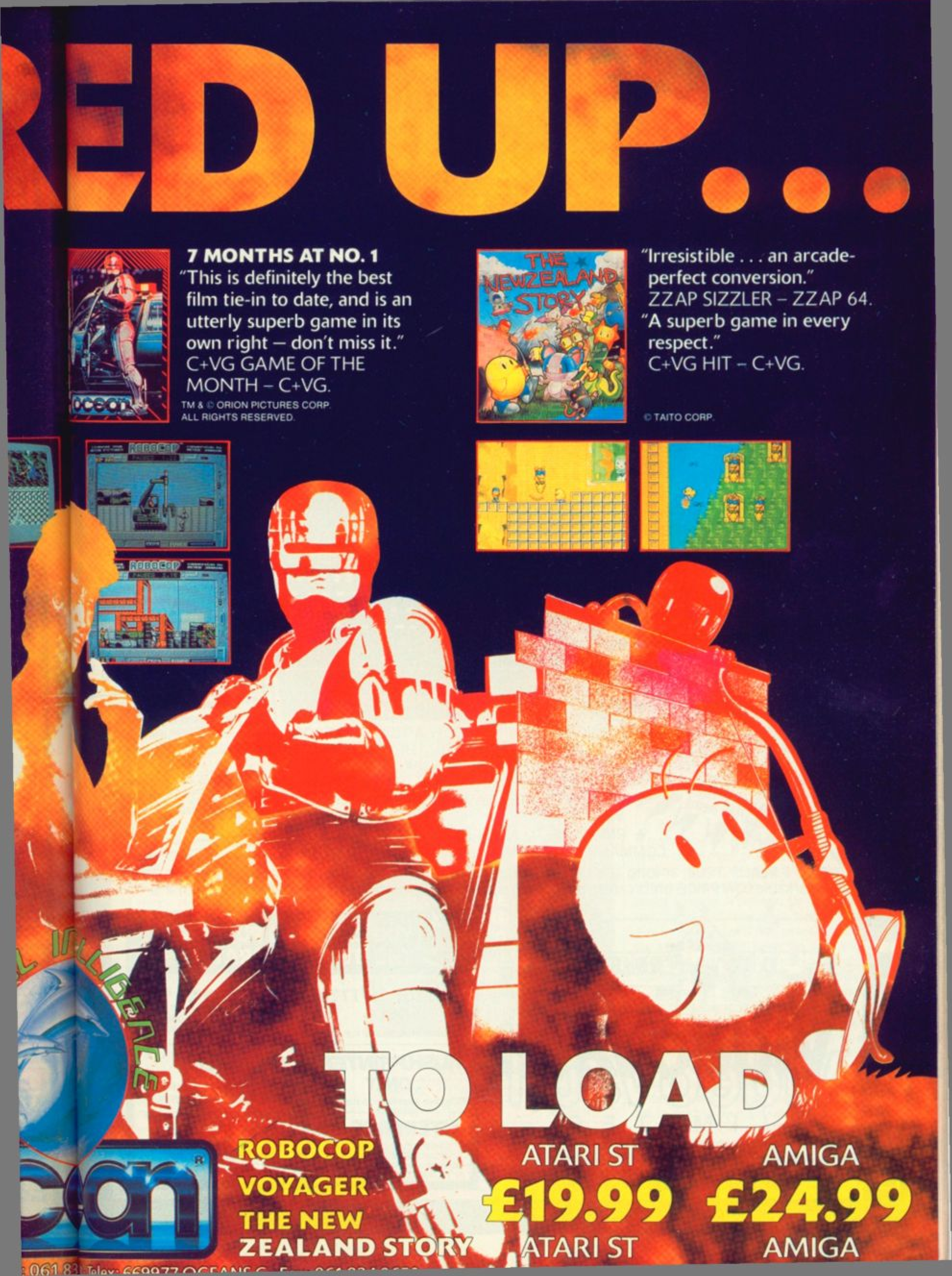
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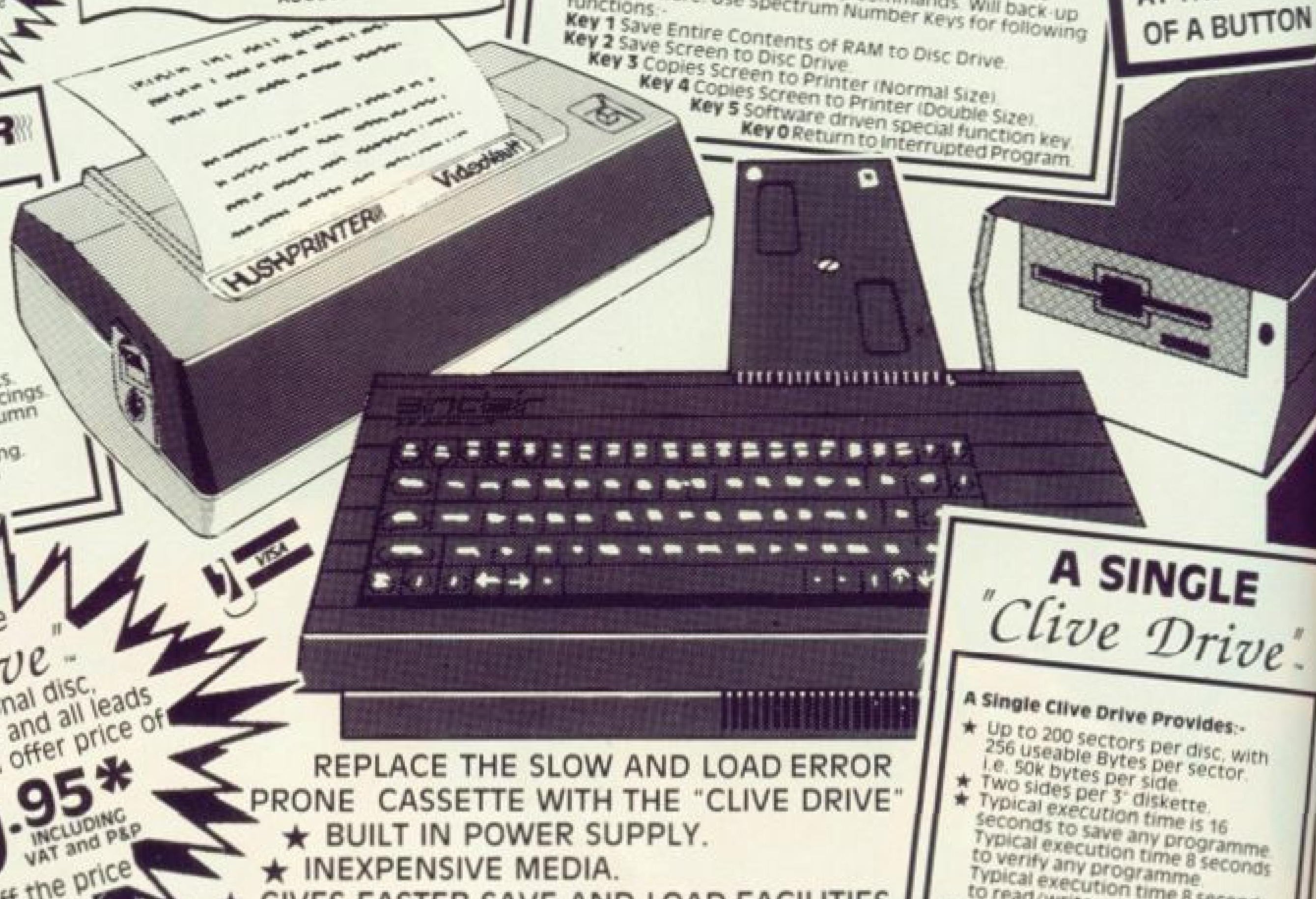

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INDIANA JONES GETS HIS OWN GRAPHIC ADVENTURE

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD/LUCASFILMS follow arcade action with graphic adventure

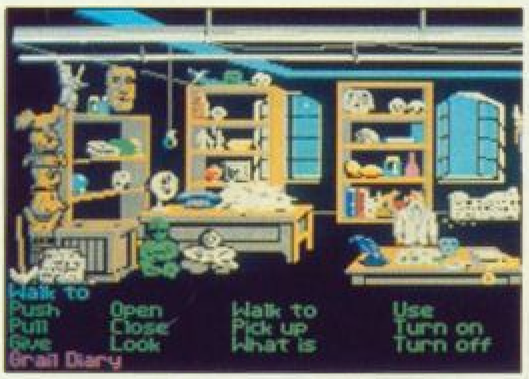
For those of you who saw any of the Indiana Jones movies, and came out of the cinema wondering what it would be like to actually BE a hero, your chance has now arrived in the graphic adventure version of the US Gold arcade game.

The first thing you notice about Indy is it's impressive packaging. Aside from the six (count them) six disks that the ST version comes on, there is a code translation table with its transparent film decoder, and a sixty-four page copy of the Dr Henry Jones's Grail Diary, containing various clues and background information for the game. Already you are beginning to feel the part and you haven't even switched on your computer!

The game itself is an arcade-adventure in similar style to previous Lucasfilm/Us Gold release Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders. The main action takes place in the centre of the screen, any game messages or dialogue appear above it, and below is your inventory and a list of verbs. the game is controlled almost entirely by the mouse, sentences can be constructed by clicking on the appropriate words, and Indy himself is moved around by using the 'walk' verb and pointing the cursor in the action window. The addition of a What is...' verb allows you to identify any object that may be of significance.

Your first task is to locate the computerised version of the Grail Diary, which can be opened up at key moments to give additional clues to those in the written version. Having found that, it's off to Venue to search for the entrance to the first of the maze sections, the catacombs, and a clue to the location of the Holy Grail. All subsequent locations are taken straight from the film, but your correct course of action is not necessarily the same as Harrison Ford's.

The puzzles are not particularly difficult but at times you may wish to result to brawn over brain and fight, rather than argue your way out of trouble. Although fisticuffs can be rewarding, gaining Indy extra items, losing a fight has a nasty tendency to end the game. Combat is the weakest aspect of the game – as one would expect from an adventure-oriented release – and as there are only three punches and three blocking moves, fighting is easily mastered, and although opponents vary in difficulty, Indy can generally out-punch them by pure speed.



Neat pics, but the animation is a bit dodgy.

LANDSCAPE 89
Background graphics are all colourful and well defined, but the character animation could have been better.

ENCOUNTERS..35
The arcadey elements of this game don't really involve encounters in the normal adventure way, and the combat system is weak.

CHALLENGE..65
Lots to do, but don't expect to rack your brains much.

SYSTEM 65
Far too much disk swapping! Otherwise an advance from Zak McKracken, but another step away from traditional adventuring. Is this is a good thing?

ACE
ADVENTURE RATING
820

Strong atmosphere makes the game instantly appealing, but we doubt you would want to return to it once it has been completed.

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The graphics are mostly of a high standard, as you would expect for this type of game. The backgrounds are all well drawn and in many cases animated. Simple effects, such as lightning, combined with some stormy effects really enhance the atmosphere. Although small, each character is well defined and detailed but their animation is simple and unconvincing. In the mazes, the characters become smaller still, and only the small section of screen directly in front of our hero, is visible.

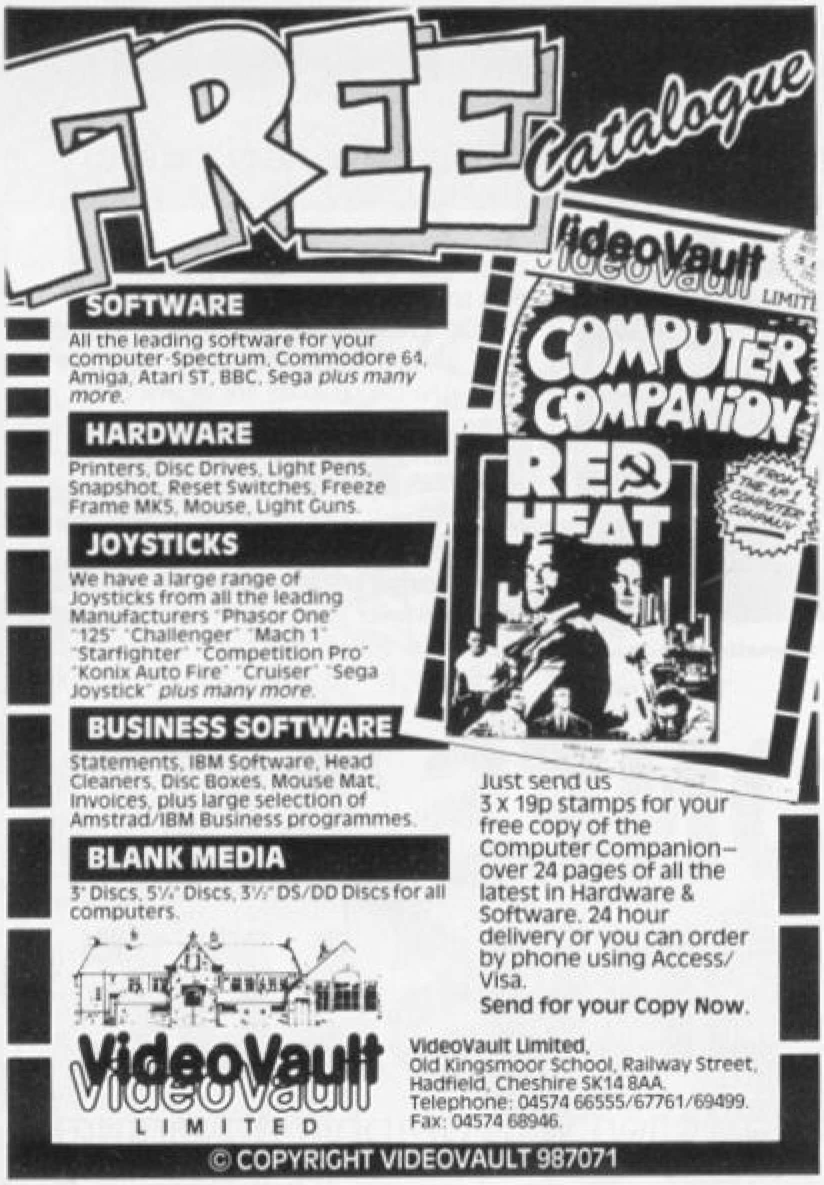
Sound is reasonably well implemented, there is the obligatory rousing rendition of the film's theme tune and some well-timed spot effects, but the cacophony that accompanies the first maze is irritating rather than atmospheric.

The main problem with this game is the constant disk accessing, every new location has to be loaded in. This is not helped by having the game spread over six disks, as there is a fair amount of disk swapping to be done as well. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the picture clears before each load, leaving you staring at a blank screen until the next is ready to be drawn. Worse still is that the consequences of many of Indy's actions also have to be loaded in, which is totally inexcusable when many of them are only simple animations lasting a couple of seconds. On occasion, certain actions, not least when loading a saved game, require several disk swaps, often using the same disk twice! Surely the programmers could have arranged their code so that actions that follow one another are on the same disk?

This aside, there is much to recommend about the game. It is very well presented and has tremendous depth. The majority of the problems are not too hard, particularly for people who have seen the film, and being unable to solve one puzzle does not necessarily lead to a dead-end, as not all need to be solved to complete the game. Even so, it is not a game that will be finished overnight, as each of the main locations is a game in itself.

Fans of the Indiana Jones movies will get a lot from the program, but be warned: progress can be very slow.

● Tony Ruben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6. C+VG
7. Commodore User
8. Gamesweek (Combined with Pop mid-Feb)
   Sinclair User
10. Your Sinclair.

Magazines Aiding Stocking Decisions

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IT'S HORRIBLE!

Horrorsoft are launching a game endorsed by the American vamp Elvira,a gal with a great...er..future...er...in front of her...

Elvira Mistress of the Dark cuts a homely figure as she settles into the deep padded settee in the lounge bar of the Chesterfield Hotel Mayfair. A pot of tea is ordered and duly appears with a side plate of Bourbon, Nice, and Rich Tea biscuits. ACE's reporter is beginning to feel nervous. Where's the vamp with the huge boobs, clinging black dress with plunging neckline, five inch spiky heels and long black wig??

All in her suit case, alas, as Elvira is all packed to jet off to Las Vegas in the morning where she is about to carry out another personality endorsement for a new pinball table.

Wearing trousers and a brown cardigan she couldn't have looked less like the sexy star of America's hit Movie Macabre horror show. Elvira is the alter ego of American Actress Cassandra Peterson. Her character introduces the coast to coast TV show from a haunted house garage let set.

The show consists of re-runs of old horror classics. Elvira introduces the films, pouts seductively before the commercial breaks, and interupts every so often to make a sarcastic comment on the action or the plot. Her quips are picked up by her army of fans and she has come up with some outstanding put downs in the eight years the show has been running. One film explained to her 'why they put barf bags on airoplanes' another was so bad that 'even the audience who saw it on a plane walked out'.

Movie Macabre started out as a local show in the Los Angeles area in 1981. Since then Elvira's popularity has spread to almost every TV station in America. The mania reached fever pitch in Los Angeles in 1982 when Elvira's Biography was broadcast in 3D. Stores reported sales of 2.7 million pairs of 3D glasses in LA alone.

Elvira has become a super star of horror. Barry Norman said of her 'Elvira is outstanding ...well two bits of her anyway.' This popularity has spawned dozens of fan clubs and - in true American fashion - warehouses full of Elvira endorsed products. You can get records, posters, greeting cards, make up , costumes, books, models, wigs, a Pinball Table from Williams and, shortly, a computer game courtesy of Horrorsoft.

Elvira hasn't seen or played the computer game but she knows all about it.

"Elvira sets up these Horror Weekends in a castle which has been taken over by an evil force. You have to find the Scroll of Spiritual Mastery to stop the wicked Emelda from ruling the world".

Despite being well briefed about the computer game Elvira's eyes really light up with genuine enthusiasm when asked about...the pinball table...

'That's my thing. It's got me actually speaking in it. It's great fun'. Her enthusiasm for the pintable is easy to understand when you learn she gets ten free ones as part of the deal. What are you going to do with ten pinball tables?

'I'll have one at home, give one to my Mom and Dad (they collect all my stuff) and probably use the others for charity promotions".

The Elvira video and computer game will be in the shops at the end of the month.

TEN THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ELVIRA

(1) The famous Elvira body measures 34D-24-34 and is 5ft 7inches tall.
(2) Elvira's favourite horror film is "Planet 9 From Outer Space".
(3) Most sexy horror vamp apart from Elvira?- "There isn't one".
(4) Favourite male actor - Nicholas Cage.
(5) Most horrific thing about London "You guys drive on the wrong side of the road".
(6) Favourite Elvira endorsed product "The most expensive one"
(7) Favourite brand of tomato ketchup - "the health shop one without additives - particularly Health Valley"
(8) Elvira has never been to Transylvania but her brother in law has.
(9) Elvira was the last recipient of one of the original Dracula Society Awards.
(10) Elvira has an Apple Macintosh at home but never uses it play games.

GREAT NEWS!

The adventure column has been severly limited in recent months, but we are now delighted to announce that from next issue, the section will be edited, expanded, and ruled with a rod of iron by Pat Winstanley.

ACE readers should already be familiar with Pat – she used to contribute a regular column (Pat's Patch) on adventure utilities and she currently runs the STAC User Group.

Pat will be guiding this column through the coming months, at a time when the adventure market is changing as never before. As well as reviews, gossip, and tips, the column will also feature regular analysis of new developments in computer fantasy. Stay tuned!

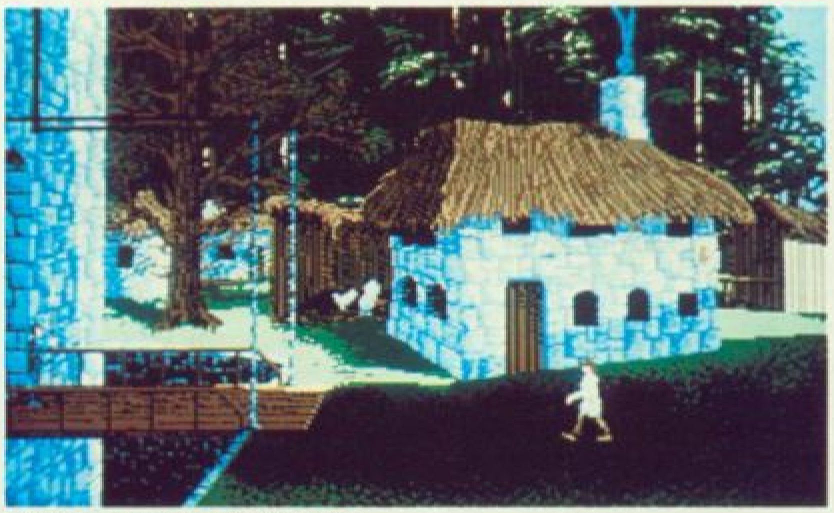
TIME TO TRAVEL ON...

PALACE are launching a new French graphic adventure.

Cinematique have been winning rave reviews in their native France for their *Future Wars - Time Travellers* adventure. The game is the work of Paul Cuisset who has spent the last three years developing the player interface.

It'll come as no surprise to regular ACE adventurous readers that there are simularities with Sierra's Leisure Suit Larry and Police Quest games in the animation and large number of graphical locations. We've already pointed out in past issues how popular the Sierra-On-Line range is in the States...and even traditional companies like Magnetic Scrolls are casting envious glances at the system and talking about 'doing more animation'.

Despite first impressions, however, the interface itself on Time Travellers is surprisingly similar to a traditional adventure. A window offers a number of choices on each location. Apart from the obvious direction options there are also examine, search and talk options.



Out and about in *Future Wars...*

The commands are implemented very quickly - giving all of the puzzling fun of an absorbing adventure without the hassle of typing in lengthy commands and twiddling your thumbs whilst the computer considers its response.

The storyline is a strong one. Earth is under attack in the 43rd century from an alien race. The advanced SDI defence system has been undermined by the aliens travelling back in time and planting bombs at strategic points before the defences were built. Your quest starts in the present and brings you to the Middle Ages, Prehistoric times and the distant future.

Throughout the game the French flair for graphics is very much in evidence. Look out for a full review of this ST, Amiga, and PC title in next month's ACE.

NO PROBLEM!

Joan Pancott telephoned me last month to complain about my printing her solution of *Souls of Darkon*, which she had sent when I was writing the Pilgrim column. Joan tells me she doesn't believe in solutions being printed – particularly since it means she gets less calls on her helpline!

Well, Joan, I have to agree about completel solutions, but I made an exception with *Souls of Darkon* because it is one of the most infuriating games I have ever come across, and I can well understand why publishers Taskset went bust shortly after releasing it.

And as far as calls are concerned, by now EVERYONE ought to know about Joan's helpline service, which has been going for several years and has clocked up literally thousands of calls. You can contact her on 0305 784155 and she can give help on most games.

Meanwhile, here's a brief selection of tips from the files of The Pilgrim and The White Wizard...and thanks to Mitch Pomfret, Jason Riley, and 'anon' for sending them in! Robert Morgan of Glasgow should be pleased – we've got the solution to the first part of *Mindfighter* that he so urgently requested.

SORCEROR OF CLAYMORGUE CASTLE

The kitchen needs examining more carefully!

KENTILLA

To prevent a good old fry up with Zelda, give her a human present of Timandra. This allows you to get the scroll!

MORDON'S QUEST

Don't spoil that Condor moment while in the arena. Don't refer to the Tele-script shop; they're out of stock.

STATIONFALL

Look at your watch and the chart before launching.
Getting into the village is a pressing problem

BUREAUCRACY

Mail order print? Read vertically
For cab ride to airport the dough must be authentic
For ID and password include hyphen!

LURKING HORROR

A meal is the key – try the fridge and then the microwave. Actually (*remarks the White Wizard*) some of the responses regarding the master key are a bit misleading: suffice it to say that you will be able to borrow it once you've fed its owner.

ZZZZ

To enter mansion, try door. When window opens climb vine. Then climb down.

KAYLETH

Spin bar by Mokki-ray. The tablet azap takes you to a dime.
The coin is in the ruins of the citadel.

TASS TIMES

Gramps is in the tower on the island. To free use zagtone.

KENTILLA

Tie the rope to the stalictite then pull. Then pull again.

MINDFIGHTER

Help with part one...
Examine the rubble at the civic centre ruins.
Give the snowstorms to Daryl.
Break the cobweb in the building to find the hidden object.
Don't drink the water, it is contaminated.
Use the wrench and the chisel to break the stairs in the ruined building
Wear the gas mask in the industrial wastelands.
A ship will arrive in the docks at 3pm on Wednesday.
Give the dead dog to the rabid foxes.
To get into a trance - INHALE, HOLD EXHALE.
To metamorphose you need to be in a trance, then METAMORPHOSE
To destroy the ship, empty the petrol, burn the rag with the lighter, and run off the ship.
After finishing your tasks in Part One, go to the fence and

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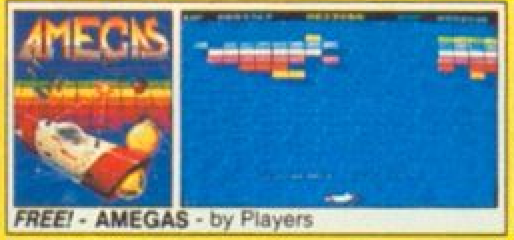
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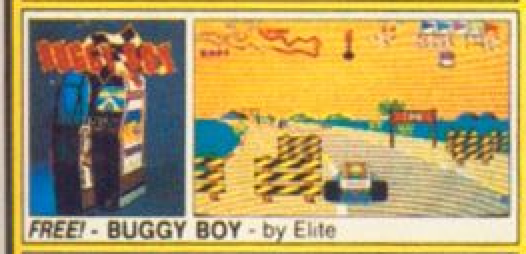
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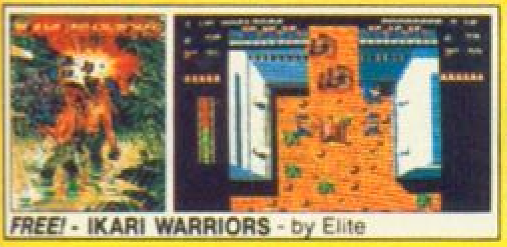
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1

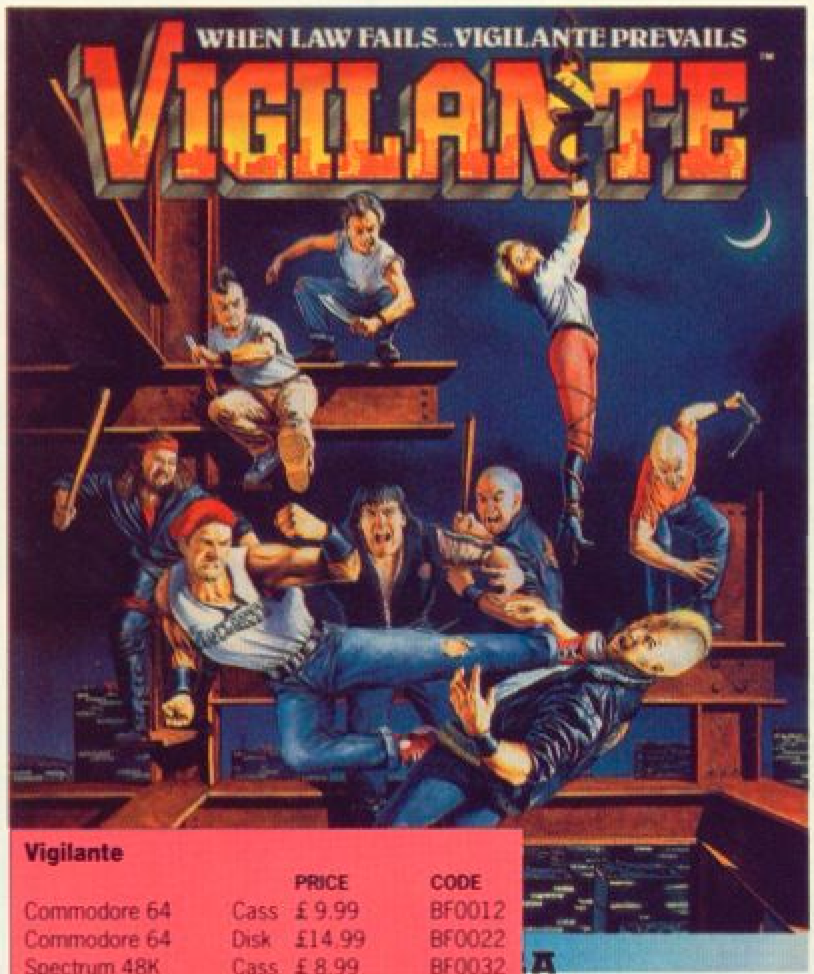
Vigilante
from U S Gold

1994 New York... the police dare not patrol the streets. The army cannot control the city and law and order no longer exists.

- 5 levels of play: Main Street, The junkyard, Brooklyn Bridge, Back Street and the Girders' construction scene.
- Different street gangs led by a giant of a gang leader.
- The Vigilante is attacked by gangs using a variety of knives, chains, guns and even dynamite in an effort to finish him off.
- Motor bike 'crews' attempt to run him over without hesitation.

'Vigilante bears an astonishing resemblance to its arcade parent' **ST Format**

Crash 86%
C & V G 81%



Vigilante

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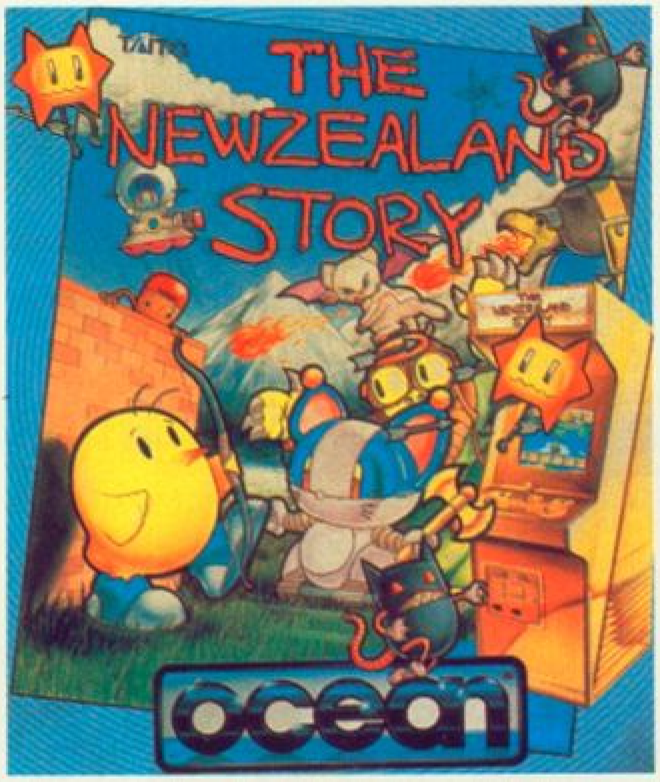
The New Zealand Story
from Ocean

Fun from down under that will have you standing on your head.

Wally Walrus has captured his tea - 20 of Joey Kiwi's friends from the New Zealand zoo, and if Joey doesn't rescue them all by tea-time they'll be stuffed, served and swallowed at Wally's table.

New Zealand Story is incredibly cute. This is an amazingly addictive game, and the difficulty tuning has been set just right.
Amiga Format 94%



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Indiana Jones The Last Crusade
from US Gold

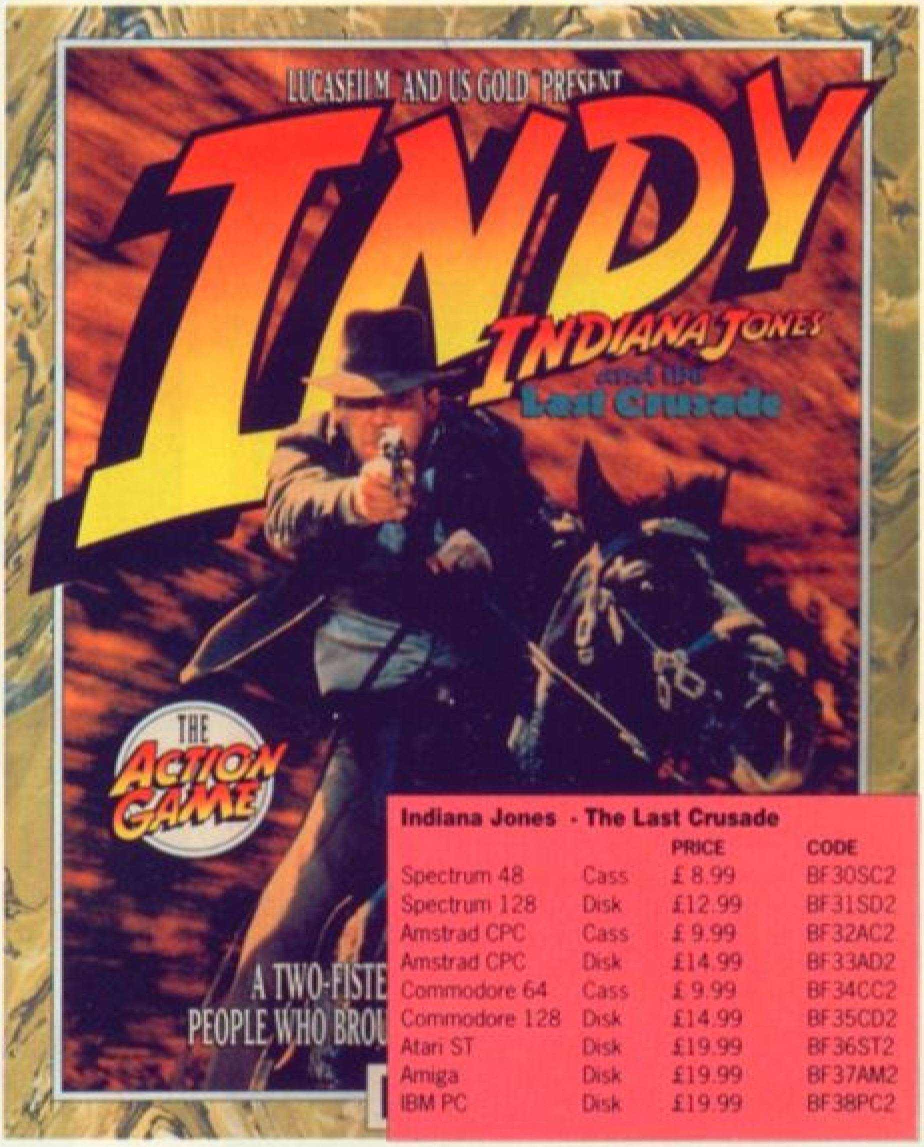
Relive the geatest action scenes from the greatest movie of all...

The game is played on four action packed levels and will become of the classic two fisted arecade games.

You have the opportunity to increase your overall score with every hazard dodged, valuable object found and enemy dispatched.

- A copy of the "Byzantine Crusader" which details the storyline and Hints & Tips is · included with the software.
- An added feature of a Whip allows Indy to capture and hold on to all objects.

"The graphics are superb, this is one of the best US Gold games to date"
ST Format 90%



Indiana Jones - The Last Crusade

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Robocop
from Ocean

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Robocop

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BEASTLY BUSINESS

IN THE PINK

This month's Pink Pages give important notice of a **whole new section – The ACE Stockmarket,** in which up to date market research will be giving **the definitive Final Verdict** on the games we play every month. There's also good news for competitors – we've really taken the **puzzle and crossword sections** in hand for the first time since the transfer of the ownership of the magazine. We'd like to apologise for the delay in printing **prize winners**, butnow you can turn to the section beginning on page 51 and find out whether you've **struck lucky**. We're delighted to announce that the teething period is now over, and from now the Pinks will be **bursting with health.**

The **ACE Guide** To The **Games You Have To Have** adds in a whole new section as well this month – on **console games**. Even if you don't have a console this section gives **important information** that could affect your buying decision, especially since buying a console is all about **software choice** rather than hardware specifications.

However, if you're looking for a new computer and **concerned about specs**, you'll be pleased to hear that next month will see the return of the **ACE Upgrade Guide**. We're currently working on this section to make it better than ever before – and it will include a **far greater range of machines**, complete with up-to-date sales information – **just in time for Christmas!**

Finally, we haven't forgotten those **greedy so-and-so's** who like to get **something for nothing**. There are the infamous **Pink Pages compos**, in which software houses fall over each other to shower **lucky readers with gifts**.

The Pinks...Britain's only **blushing guide** to computer entertainment...

THE ACE STOCK MARKET

NEXT MONTH ACE WILL BE LAUNCHING A WHOLE NEW SECTION: THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO GAMES REVIEWS IN THE UK. YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND OUT – AT A GLANCE – WHICH GAMES ARE WOWING THE REVIEWERS. AND NOT ONLY THAT, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WALK AWAY WITH SOME GREAT PRIZES EACH MONTH!

Buying software is still something of a gamble. Even when you've sorted through the reviews, examined the screenshots, and peered over someone's shoulder to see the shop demo, you still can't be 100% sure you'll still be playing the game avidly in six months time - never mind six weeks or even six days time. And with full-price titles still mostly over a tenner and 16-bit games nearer £20-£25, buying software is an investment. An investment in which you can't be at all sure of your return.

Here at ACE we hope to make investing in games software a little less fraught with pitfalls – and give you some fun into the bargain. Welcome to the ACE Stock Market - and as an ACE reader you automatically qualify for a place on the ACE Stock Exchange floor.

Here is where you can check up on companies' track records and their performance over the months, not in financial, profit-and-loss terms - we'll leave that to The Economist, thank you - but based directly on the quality of their current releases.

You'll be able to monitor publishers and their publishing labels, watch their fortunes rise and fall through the - bull market in the pre-Christmas season as games tumble out from every software house under the sun, to the bear market of the summer months, when sales and output peter down to a trickle.

We'll be tracking the performance of every game in every review published in the UK. We'll monitor how highly each title rates overall, and how well its graphics and sound capabilities score. And when we've compiled this mountain of statistical data, we'll hand it over to an expert in the field.

We've enlisted the aid of a qualified data processing and market research professional, Geoffrey Roughton, to develop a set of statistical routines that will sort all these numbers to give a meaningful set of figures at the end - games quality 'share price' for each month's set of reviews for each publisher. It will take into account individual ratings, weighted against the number of games produced. There will be an overall figure and separate scores for graphics and sound.

The routines will make allowances for individual magazine bias (where a title regularly rates games higher than other magazines, for example) and will also take into account the different reviewing systems used. We hope to be able to cover graphics and sound ratings as well as overall verdicts at a later stage.

As companies fortunes fluctuate throughout the year, you'll be able to keep your own portfolio of their progress. Then, when it comes to buying games, you'll be better informed about the track record of the team concerned, and the amount of risk involved.

THE TRADING COUNTERS

The ACE Stockmarket will be divided into 'Trading Counters'. Each of these counters will cover a specific area of the market place (the counters are described below) and will quote 'prices' and market positions. Prizes will be awarded to ACE readers who can pinpoint these prices and positions *in advance*. A full explanation of the system will be printed in next month's ACE together with the first entry form. Alternatively, you can get details by sending an A4 stamped addressed envelope to The ACE Stockmarket, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

THE 8-BIT COUNTER

A difficult one this, since you can't always be sure which title will convert best. This is an opportunity for some real risk-taking. Will *Continental Circus* really cut the mustard on the smaller machines? One thing's for certain – this counter is going to put a bit of zing back into the 8-bit debate...

THE 16-BIT COUNTER

Here you can find out which is the most highly rated 16-bit game of the month. Can you predict which titles Amiga and ST owners will be raving about in the future. Will Mirrorsoft's *Interphase* roar to the top of the market? Or is *Powerdrift* the one to watch? If you've got your finger on the pulse, you could get your hands on some big, big prizes.

THE MACHINE COUNTER

This counter will list the various titles BY MACHINE FORMAT. It will enable you to see instantly which game the reviewers are really tipping for your micro. Not only will it help you to decide which games to invest it, it will also give you a chance to exercise your knowledge of your micro's capabilities for certain types of software. Pick the right games in the right positions, and you could be sitting pretty.

THE COMPANY COUNTER

Here's where the fur really starts flying! Which companies are taking the trophies in the reviews stakes. Can a company ride its way up the market on the back of a single tremendous title, or will the giants hold sway at the top of the league? Are the American software houses ruling the UK roost, or is Britain holding its own? Get it right, and get rich...well, almost!

TITLE FIGHT...

Here's a selection of recent titles together with average ratings to give you some basic data that will help you take over the ACE Stockmarket floor when trading opens next month. Start your stockbook now – you're going to have to track the performances of games AND software houses – this list is based on actual reviews published in recent weeks and is VALUABLE DATA so don't waste the opportunity!

GAME	SOFTWARE HOUSE	SCORE
Rick Dangerous	Firebird/Microprose	85
Strider	US Gold	88
Xenon II	Image Works	93
Tank Attack	CDS	78
Fast Break	Accolade	49
Oil Imperium	Reline	78
Castle Warrior	Delphine/Palace	60
Shufflepuck Cafe	Domark	71
All Points Bulletin	Domark	75
Turbo	MicroIllusions	85
Shadow of the Beast	Psygnosis	87
Battle Valley	Hewson	81
Gemini Wing	Virgin Mastertronic	61
New Zealand Story	Ocean	88
Rainbow Islands	Firebird/Microprose	87
Passing Shot	Image Works	65
Paperboy	Elite	79
Populous: The Promised Lands	Electronic Arts	86
Mr Heli	Firebird/Microprose	58
Thunderbirds	Grandslam	86
Conflict Europe	Image Works	71
Fiendish Freddy	Mindscape	83
Leonardo	Starbyte	71
Jack Nicklaus Golf	Accolade	64
RVF	Microstyle	66
King Arthur	Infocom	82
F16 Combat Pilot	Digital Integration	89
Robocop	Ocean	49
Great Courts	Ubi Soft	78
Sleeping Gods Lie	Empire	76
Barbarian II	Palace	76
The Champ	Linel	45
Chariots of Wrath	Impressions	71
Skate of the Art	Linel	38
Indiana and the Last Crusade	US Gold	61
Journey	Infocom	78
Nightdawn	Magic Bytes	63
Alien Legion	Gainstar	36
Beam	Magic Bytes	72
Grand Prix Circuit	Accolade	51
Kult	Exxos	85
SDI	Activision	57
Tom and Jerry	Magic Bytes	47
Xybots	Tengen/Domark	81
Buffalo Bill	Tynesoft	80
Navy Moves	Dinamic	34
Omni-Play Basketball	Mindscape	75
Shinobi	Virgin	77
Astaroth	Hewson	71
Licence to Kill	Domark	71
FOFT	Gremlin	69
High Steel	Screen 7	39
Phobia	Image Works	72

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Are you an ACE Stockmarket wizard? If so, you could take a slice of the cake each month as we dish out prizes to enterprising readers...

Different people like different games – and that goes for reviewers as well, and even for magazines. Here on ACE, for example, we favour games that demonstrate originality and can be seen to further the cause of computer entertainment. But just how good is your own instinctive feeling about a game? Or about the fortunes of a software house? We're going to give you the chance to walk away with big prizes each month if you can predict the way the 'shares' are moving in the ACE Stockmarket...

HOUSEY HOUSEY

We'll also be printing each month the names of the software houses whose products feature in Stock Exchange ratings, and their order of ranking according to the reviews they've received in the current survey period. If you fancy your knowledge of the games scene, you can join in by sending us your predictions for future months: if you can name the top five software houses you'll pick up a valuable prize (details in the Stockmarket Launch issue next month). Beats the stockmarket any day...

HIGH PERFORMANCE

You can also win prizes by naming the top five games for any of the top machines in correct order. There are further prizes going each month for the man who hits the nail on the head.

BONUS PRIZES!

If either prize goes unclaimed, it's added to the jackpot for the following month. Market conditions are pretty tough out there, so expect to see some pretty hefty prizes building up during the months ahead...

Finally, we'll be offering regular bonus prizes, so keep tuned to The Final Verdict and sharpen both your wits and your pencil!

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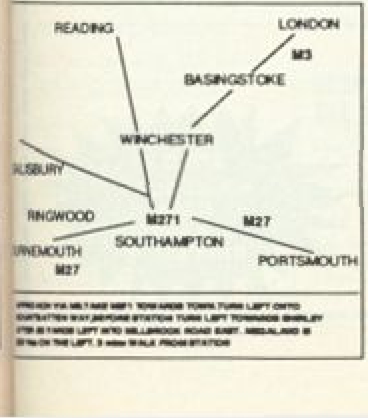

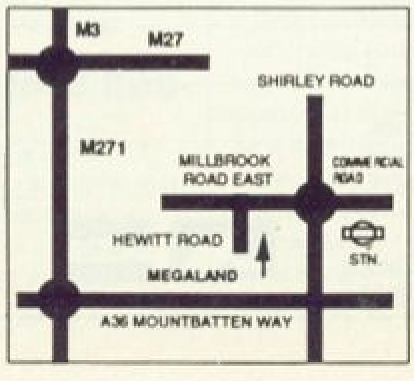

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F-16 Combat Pilot	10.99	10.99	10.99	14.50	15.99	15.99
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Falcon Mission Disk	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.99	12.99
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Football Manager II	5.95	5.95	5.95	10.50	12.99	12.99
Forgotten Worlds	7.50	8.50	8.50	12.50	14.99	14.99
Gary Lineker's Hot Shots	6.50	7.99	7.99	12.50	14.99	14.99
Gemini Wing	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.99	12.99	12.99

Spectrum Special Offers

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Barbarian	3.99	Never Ending Story	0.99
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Chartbusters	5.99	Quill + Illustrator	7.99
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Fernandez Must Die	3.99	Sydney Affair	1.99
Gryzer	3.99	The Realm	0.95
Handball	0.99	Trivial Pursuits	5.99
Marauder	3.99	Wizball	3.99

Title	Spectrum	C64	AMS Cass	AMS Disc	ST	Amiga
Grand Prix Circuit	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.99	17.99
Gunship	6.95	10.50	10.50	12.99	15.95	15.95
H.A.T.E.	8.50	8.50	8.50	N/A	14.99	17.99
Heat Wave	6.99	6.99	6.99	12.99	N/A	N/A
Hostages	N/A	6.99	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Indiana Jones Last Crusade	7.50	8.50	8.50	12.50	14.99	14.99
Kenny Dalglish Soccer Manager	5.50	6.99	6.99	8.99	12.99	12.99
Kick Off	N/A	6.99	N/A	N/A	12.99	12.99
Last Ninja II	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.99	17.99	17.99
LED Storm	6.99	7.50	7.50	10.99	13.99	16.99
Licence To Kill	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	12.99	12.99
Maze Mania	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	N/A	N/A
Microprose Soccer	8.50	10.99	10.99	13.99	15.99	15.99
Millenium 2.2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19.99	19.99
Monster	N/A	8.50	N/A	N/A	14.99	14.99
Mr Heli	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	15.99	15.99
Navy Moves	8.50	8.50	8.50	N/A	14.99	17.99

Title	Spectrum	C64	AMS		ST	Amiga
			Cass	Disc		
Newzealand Story	5.99	6.50	6.50	10.50	11.99	14.99
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Pac Mania	5.99	5.99	5.99	10.99	9.99	9.99
Pacland	5.99	5.99	5.99	10.99	9.99	9.99
Populous	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	16.99	16.99
Populous: Promised Lands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.99	7.99
R-Type	7.25	5.99	7.25	10.99	13.99	16.99
R.V.F. Honda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
RAC Lombard Rally	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Rainbow Island	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	15.99	15.99
Ralley Cross	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	12.99	12.99
Red Heat	5.50	6.50	6.50	9.99	10.99	14.99
Renegade	5.99	5.99	5.99	10.50	11.99	15.99
Renegade III	6.50	6.50	6.50	10.50	10.99	14.99

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Captain Blood	9.99	Space Quest II	9.99
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Driller	8.99	Spitting Images	6.99
Empire Strikes Back	9.99	Star Wars	9.99
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Flintstones	4.99	Zynaps	5.99
Hellbend	2.99	**TRIAD**	
Hostages	9.99	**Stargilder +**	Only
Hotball	6.99	**Defenders of Crown +**	12.99
King of Chicago	9.99	**Barbarian/Psygnosis**	

Title	Spectrum	C64	AMS Cass	AMS Disc	ST	Amiga
Rick Dangerous	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	N/A	N/A
Robocop	6.50	6.50	6.50	10.50	11.99	14.99
Rocket Ranger	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.99	18.99
Run the Gauntlet	6.50	6.50	6.50	10.50	11.99	15.99
Running Man	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	15.99	15.99
Shinobi	6.99	6.99	6.99	N/A	12.99	12.99
Silkworm	6.99	6.99	6.99	N/A	12.99	12.99
Silpheed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.99	21.99
Sleeping Gods Lie	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14.99	14.99
Speedball	N/A	6.50	N/A	N/A	14.99	14.99
Spherical	N/A	8.50	N/A	N/A	14.99	14.99
Stealth Fighter	6.95	10.50	10.50	12.99	15.95	N/A
Steve Davis Snooker	1.99	1.99	1.99	N/A	13.99	13.99
Storm Lord	5.50	6.99	6.99	10.50	12.99	12.99
Stormtrooper	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12.99	14.99
Stunt Car	6.99	6.99	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Super Hang On	6.99	6.99	6.99	6.99	13.99	16.99
Targhan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99

C64 Specials		Amstrad Specials	
Arkanoid II	3.99	Arkanoid II	3.99
Barbarian	3.99	Chartbusters	5.99
Captain Blood	3.99	Computer Classics	4.99
Chartbusters	5.99	Cybernoid	3.99
Computer Classics	4.99	Empire Strikes Back	4.99
Empire Strikes Back	4.99	Fernandez Must Die	2.99
Football Director	2.99	Krypton Factor	3.99
Gryzer	3.99	Marauder	3.99
Imhotep	0.99	Quill + Illustrator	7.99
Laurel & Hardy	0.99	Renegade	3.99
Match Day II	3.99	Return of Jedi	4.99
Renegade	3.99	Star Wars	4.99
Return of Jedi	4.99	Strike Force Harrier	2.99
Star Wars	4.99	Vixen	2.99
Trivial Pursuits	5.99	Wizball	3.99

Title	Spectrum	C64	AMS Cass	AMS Disc	ST	Amiga
The Munchers	6.50	8.50	N/A	N/A	16.50	16.50
The Real Ghostbusters	7.99	7.99	7.99	12.50	13.99	16.99
The Temple of Flying Saucers	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Thunderbirds	8.99	8.99	8.99	10.50	15.99	15.99
Time Scanner	7.50	7.50	7.50	11.50	14.99	17.99
Ultimate Golf	N/A	7.99	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Vigilante	7.50	8.50	8.50	10.50	11.99	11.99
Vindicators	6.50	6.50	6.50	10.50	11.99	11.99
Voyager	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.99	14.99
WEC Le Mans	6.50	6.50	6.50	9.99	11.99	14.99
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Weird Dreams	N/A	6.99	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Xenon II – Megablast	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.99	19.99
Xenophobe	N/A	6.99	N/A	N/A	15.99	15.99
Xybots	6.99	6.99	6.99	10.50	12.99	12.99
Zak McKracken	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	16.99	16.99
Zany Golf	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.99	17.99

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THE GAMES YOU HAVE TO HAVE...

SOMETIMES YOU KNOW YOU'VE GOT TO FACE UP TO THE TRUTH. YOUR SOFTWARE COLLECTION IS GETTING YOU DOWN, YOUR DOG'S SICK, YOUR FRIENDS ARE CONVINCED IT WAS YOU THAT LOST THE WINNING POOLS COUPON, YOUR MOTHER HAS DECIDED YOU NEED TO CHANGE YOUR IMAGE, AND YOUR GIRLFRIEND (OR BOYFRIEND) HAS JUST BEEN EATEN BY A ROTTWEILER...THERE'S ONLY ONE THING FOR IT...GO OUT AND GET A NEW GAME. AND TO MAKE SURE YOU REALLY SEE THE BRIGHT SIDE, HERE'S A LIST OF GAMES YOU'VE JUST GOT TO ADD TO YOUR COLLECTION.

ARCADE STYLE

Including coin-op conversions. Games with a high fun factor and plenty of addictive action feature in this category.

ARKANOID

Imagine ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Atari XL/XE £8.95cs ● Atari ST £14.95dk ● MSX £8.95cs ● IBM PC £19.95dk

Conversion from *Arkanoid* the coin-op, in its turn the best version of the classic *Breakout*. Simple in concept: the player controls a bat at the base of the screen, whizzing it left and right. The object is to keep a small ball in play, bouncing it off the bat to destroy formations of bricks in the top half of the screen. Eliminate all the bricks and move on to the next of 33 screens. Clever extra features contribute to the addictiveness. As a faithful coin-op conversion, *Arkanoid* comes out top, but for a different slant on the same theme and some nifty music, try ASL's *Impact*, which also builds up the difficulty levels more gradually.

★ ACE CLASSIC

BOUNDER

Gremlin Graphics ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £9.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £13.95dk

A great arcade bounce-em-up, and very addictive too. You guide a ball as it bounces from one platform to another, high above the vertically scrolling landscape. Land on marked squares and you can stay aloft longer or gain a mystery bonus. Fill in a gap or hit one of the game's many nasties, however, and you'll lose a life. Bonus bouncing sections at the end of each level help vary the pace, and those tough gaps really keep you coming back for more. Bright, witty graphics, great music – and it's so playable.

★ ACE CLASSIC

BUBBLE BOBBLE

Firebird ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk

Playability is the essence of this two-player coin-op conversion. You and a friend play bubble-blowing dinosaurs, travelling through 100 maze-and-platform screens, fighting off the 'bullies' by encapsulating them in your bubbles to turn them into juicy fruit. More firepower and various bonuses await as you reach the more difficult later screens. Enormously good fun, if a little on the cutesy side. Can also be played as one player against the computer.

★ ACE RATED 958

CONQUEROR

Superior ● Archimedes £24.95dk (Amiga and ST versions under development)

Drive around in your very own tank! Blast the enemy in close combat and plan your strategy for the campaign. This is a tricky game to get to grips with, but if you persevere you'll find you soon become mesmerised by the thing. If you ain't got a 1Mb Archie though – forget it!

★ ACE RATED 931

ELIMINATOR

Hewson ● Spectrum £7.99cs £12.99dk ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £19.99dk

Graphically wonderful roadway blast-em-up by John Phillips, which will twist your joystick inside-out. It'll even have you driving on the ceiling. Though it's tough to get to grips with at first, the addiction level's so great you'll keep coming back for more.

★ ACE RATED 904

EXOLON

Hewson ● Spectrum £7.95cs ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk

Graphically superb horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up in which you run, duck and jump your way along a planet's surface blasting away at alien defences. A gun and a missile launcher are used to blast the foes, but if things are still too tough then you can grab an exoskeleton for extra protection and fire power.

★ ACE CLASSIC

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Ocean ● Spectrum £8.95cs, C64 £9.95cs, Amstrad £9.95cs, ST £19.99, Amiga £24.99

Although pipped at the post in a head to head with Rainbow Islands, New Zealand Story is not a game to be ruled out. It is immense fun to play, provides lots of varied action across many levels. Definitely worth checking out.

★ ACE RATED 875

OIDS

Mirrorsoft ● Atari ST £19.99dk

A magnificent *Thrust*-ish blast. The Oids are relying on you to save them, but the Biocretes aren't going to let them go without throwing missiles, rockets and a number of other weapons at you. Included with the program is an edit facility that allows you to design your own planetoids – great stuff!

★ ACE RATED 969

PITSTOP 2

Epyx/US Gold ● Available only on Epyx Epics compilation ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● IBM PC £29.95dk (in compilation with *Winter Games* and *Summer Games 2*)

Thrilling racing game where the screen is split into two and you can race the computer or a friend. Lots of different Grand Prix circuits, tyre blowouts and of course the all-important pitstops guarantee to give you hand cramp and your brain a real racing treat.

★ ACE CLASSIC

POWERDROME

Electronic Arts ● Atari ST £24.95dk

This superb arcade-style futuristic driving simulation will have you enthralled for months to come. It may not be terribly easy to get straight into but it's well worth persevering with. You'll be playing this for months.

★ ACE RATED 925

PURPLE SATURN DAY

Exxos ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95

A terrific mix of games that delivers punch both audio and visual. The consistently good gameplay ensures you'll enjoy playing each sub-game time and again. It's a little tricky to get the hang off, but master it and you'll be pleased you persevered.

★ ACE RATED 912

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Firebird, Spectrum £9.95cs £14.95dk, C64 £9.99cs $14.99dk, Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk, ST £24.99, Amiga £24.99

The sequel to Bubble Bobble is nothing short of fantastic. The graphics and sound are superb, as is the gameplay.

One of the best (and cutest arcade conver-

sions of the year that should not be missed.
★ ACE RATED 934

RVF

Microstyle, ST £24.99, Amiga £29.99

RVF offers a near endless supply of fast paced bike action as you race your Honda RVF. Attention to detail is paid out all along the route with your rider giving the bike a push start after a crash. An excellent mix of arcade and simulation.
★ ACE RATED 915

SPIDERTRONIC

Ere International ● Atari ST £19.95dk

Guide your spider-like character around the game area, collecting coloured panels in the correct order. The built-in construction set means you'll be knocking out your own levels till the cows come home.
★ ACE RATED 903

SUMMER GAMES

Epyx/US Gold ● C64 £9.95 cs £14.95dk ● IBM PC £29.95dk

Epyx sporting simulations are of high quality but none have quite captured the playability and style of the original *Summer Games* and its immediate successor, *Summer Games 2*. One to six players can take part in high jump, gymnastics, springboard diving, clay pigeon shooting, swimming, pole vault – and others – with lovely large graphics and smooth animation throughout. Control of your athlete can be complex so practice is recommended.
★ ACE CLASSIC

SUPER SPRINT

Electric Dreams ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk Amstrad £9.99cs Spectrum £9.99cs ● Atari ST £19.99dk

One of the better coin-op conversions currently available. With up to three players all competing at once, the action is fast and furious and it will take a finely-tuned car to complete some of the more tortuous circuits that appear later in the game.
★ ACE RATED 907

THRUST

Firebird ● Spectrum £1.99cs ● C64 £1.99cs ● Amstrad £1.99cs

Terrifyingly sensitive controls and a large helping of real-life physics make this budget title an absolute must. Flying down through the caverns of an enemy-held planet, you have to pick up fuel and destroy hostile gun turrets without crashing into the tunnel walls. Tough enough as it is, but then you've got to make the return journey with a heavy load slung under your craft. Very mean, very addictive.
★ ACE CLASSIC

URIDIUM

Hewson ● Spectrum £8.95cs ● C64 £9.95cs £12.95dk ● BBC £9.95cs £14.95dk

The piece de resistance of scrolling shoot-em-ups: blast the dreadnought and attacking ships while dodging around any large structures. Great metallic-looking dreadnoughts and the smoothest scrolling you'll ever see put this head and shoulders above the opposition. A game not to be missed, especially now that C64 versions come packaged with the excellent *Paradroid*.
ACE CLASSIC

ZARCH / VIRUS

Superior Software ● Archimedes £19.95dk ● Firebird (16 and 8-bit versions) Amiga £19.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk ● Some 8-bit versions under development

A solid three dimensional shoot-em-up with such graphic perfection and timelessly addictive gameplay that it became an instant classic. Now the 16-bit versions have arrived and they're just as good as the 32-bit versions.
★ ACE RATED 981

ADVENTURES

After a brief surge of RPG_related popularity, the traditional text-entry adventure is rapidly disappearing. But for those of you who savour the powers of the imagination, the verbal twist, and the thrill of encountering other characters, this game genre still has much to recommend it. Here are some of the all-time great computer fantasies...

BEYOND ZORK

Infocom/Activision ● C64 £19.99dk ● PC £24.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk ● Atari ST £24.99dk

Infocom's attempt to muscle in on the role-playing market is a great success. Locate the fabulous Coconut of Quendor in a game that combines the wit and ingenuity of one of the world's most original software companies with state-of-the-art parsing and gameplay. Text-only, but with an on-screen mapping facility.
★ ACE RATED 902

CORRUPTION

Rainbird ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk ● Spectrum £15.95dk ● C64 £17.95dk ● Amstrad 6128 £19.95dk

This tale of insider dealings, infidelity and crooked business deals is unlikely to appeal to adventurers who prefer to wander through vast dungeon networks seeking treasure. But for those who are fed up with traditional adventuring, it's like a breath of fresh air. Superb graphics, great atmosphere and a nail-biting plot makes this a terrific game that grips from the start.
★ ACE RATED 920

FISH

Magnetic Scrolls ● PC £24.99dk Amiga £24.99dk

More gameplay than *Corruption*, better game design than *Jinxter*, and not as quirky as *The Pawn*. This is definitely MS's best release since *Guild Of Thieves*. Good stuff indeed.
★ ACE RATED

GUILD OF THIEVES

Rainbird ● C64 £19.95dk ● Spectrum £15.95dk ● Amstrad 6128 £19.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● PC £24.95dk

One of Britain's newer adventure software houses – Magnetic Scrolls – managed to produce a traditional treasure hunt with superb graphics and some very tricky puzzles. Powerful parser helps to create a convincing game world with humour and imagination.
★ ACE CLASSIC

INGRID'S BACK

Level 9 ● Atari ST £19.95dk

A great follow-up to *Gnome Ranger*. Level 9 have really got to grips with the use of characters in their games and how to program them very effectively.
★ ACE RATED 920

JEWELS OF DARKNESS

Rainbird ● C64 £14.95cs ● Spectrum 128 £14.95cs ● Amstrad £14.95cs £19.95dk ● PC £19.95dk ● Amiga £19.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk

Level 9 have put together three of their classic releases, *Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure* and *Adventure Quest* in one bundle. The games have been updated with graphics and larger vocabularies and are as close to the original spirit of adventuring as you're likely to find.
★ ACE CLASSIC

LURKING HORROR

Infocom/Mediagenic ● C64 £19.99dk ● ST £24.99 | Amiga £24.99 ● PC £24.99

Infocom's tribute to H.P. Lovecraft and the horror-fantasy genre sends you into a cold sweat as you discover something very nasty lurking beneath your college laboratory. Superb text-only game that defies you to play it after dark...
★ ACE CLASSIC

TIME AND MAGIK

Mandarin ● Spectrum £14.95cs £14.95dk ● C64 £14.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £14.95cs £14.95dk ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £19.99dk ● PC £19.99dk

This compilation of the Level 9 games, *Lords Of Time, Red Moon* and *The Price Of Magik* have been re-vamped with better parsing, bigger vocabularies and pictures added. Superb value if you don't already own them.
★ ACE RATED 919

ZORK ZERO

Infocom Versions due out about now. Watch this space for price info. Highly enjoyable with a variety of challenges that make for instant addiction. A bit more character interaction would have made this a real humdinger, but even so it remains one of the best games of the year so far.
★ ACE RATED

PUZZLES

If you're after a game that will provide you with a real challenge, without necessarily requiring large doses of strategic thinking, then it's a puzzle game you want.

BONE-CRUNCHER

Superior Software ● C64 £9.95cs11.95dk ● Amiga £14.95

At first sight this recent release may appear to be nothing more than a boulderdash rip-off. However there are a number of innovative gameplay features which give Bonecruncher a feel all of its own. Highly recommended for those who prefer to solve problems rather than shoot them.
★ ACE RATED 948 – AMIGA

BOULDERDASH

Prism Leisure Corporation ● Spectrum £2.99cs ● C64 £2.99cs ● Amstrad £2.99cs

A game that has everything – instant addiction, long-term challenge, frenetic excitement as the clock ticks down and extremely tricky puzzles. You must collect jewels hidden in caverns, digging away earth and boulders to get tat them. Boulders can drop and cause you serious damage, while the jewels are often hidden by seemingly impenetrable walls. Complex but great fun. Boulderdash is a classic you can't afford to miss in its budget incarnation.
★ ACE CLASSIC

DEFLEKTOR

Gremlin/Vortex ● C64 £9.99cs ● Spectrum £7.99cs ● ST £19.95dk

Optics are the order of the day here (not the spirit dispensers) as the player tries to connect a laser beam to a receiver and at the same time destroy a

Official Secrets for people who want more £22.00

Confidential 32-page A4 bi-monthly glossy magazine VALUE £12.00

Confidential is written for people who take their fun seriously. If you are into Adventure, Strategy, FRPs, MUGs, PBMs, D&Ds, or if you would simply like to see more from behind the scenes then Confidential is essential reading. Regular features include Personnel File, Dead Letters, The Man in Black, Feature Articles, Brain Teasers, Diary, News, Competitions, and The Boss Upstairs. Club participation is welcomed.

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Dynamite Dux	6.99	6.99	6.99
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Lazer Squad	6.99	6.99	6.99
Microprose Soccer	6.99	9.99	9.99
New Zealand Story	6.99	6.99	6.99
Paul Gasgoine Super Soccer	6.99	6.99	6.99
Quarterback	6.99	6.99	6.99
R-Type	6.99	6.99	6.99
Robocop	6.99	6.99	6.99
Running Man	6.50	6.99	6.99
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COMPILATIONS SP CO AMS

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CASS 6.99

Karate Ace Way of the Exploding Fist, Bruce Lee, Kung Fu Master, Avenger, Samurai Trilogy, Uchi Mata & Way of the Tiger.
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CASS 6.99 DISC 11.99

number of cells that are on screen as well. You'll need to make full use of the mirrors, fibre-optic conduits and polarising and refracting blocks if you're to achieve your aim. Clear the first screen and you'll only have 59 more to do. Fascinating stuff that's horribly addictive.
★ ACE RATED 906 – ST

NEBULUS

Hewson ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99 dk● Atari ST £14.99 dk

Guide pogo to the top of eight towers using the spiral of platforms, lifts and ledges that form the route. It's a highly original game that strikes a fine balance between frustration and addiction, added to which is the rotary scroll, thus making it a good-looking, playable winner of a game.
★ ACE RATED 943 - C64

SENTINEL

Firebird ● Spectrum £9.95 cs ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95 dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk ● Amiga £19.99dk

Bizarre and compelling strategy game played over the chequered surface of a planet dominated by the Sentinel. Fundamentally you have to absorb energy while trying to stop the Sentinel from absorbing yours. A clean brain and fast trigger finger are both necessary in this very original and large - 10,000 possible landscapes - game.
★ ACE RATED 963 - AMIGA

SKULL DIGGERY

Nexus● Atari ST £19.95

Boulderdash clone that completely outdoes the original on this particular machine. Again (see Boulderdash above) you're digging for diamonds in caverns over a hundred different screens - with a time limit for each screen. Skulldiggery scores on playability (easier screens to begin with and a choice of starting point) and its entertaining two-player option.
★ ACE RATED 919 - ST

SPORE

Bulldog ● C64 £1.99cs ● Amstrad £1.99cs ● Spectrum £1.99cs

The winning combination of strategy, frenzied blasting and great graphics make Spore a worthy full-priced release - what a bargain then to be able to pick it up for £1.99!
★ ACE RATED 919 - C64

TETRIS

Mirrorsoft ● Spectrum £8.99 cs ● C64 £8.99cs £12.99dk ● Amstrad £8.99cs £12.99 dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk ● Amiga £19.99dk ● IBM PC £19.99dk

A fascinating geometrical oddity, this Russian puzzler turns the obscure mathematical topic of packing into a cult game. One at a time, shapes fall downwards into a rectangular playing area. Left to their own devices they'll pile up until they reach the top of the screen; your task is to guide them down and pack them tightly so that doesn't happen. Different versions have proved to be rather variable in their arcade aspects, but the brilliantly simple idea behind them means they're well worth a look whatever your machine.
★ ACE RATED 959 - C64

THINK!

Firebird ● C64 £1.99cs ● Amstrad £1.99cs ● Spectrum £1.99cs

Originally released by Ariolasoft at full price, but now available for a fraction of that from Firebird. It's a horribly addictive game played on a 6x6 grid - either one or two player - in which you attempt to connect four counters, horizontally, vertically or diagonally.
★ ACE CLASSIC

XOR

Logotron ● BBC £9.95cs £12.85dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk● Spectrum £7.95cs

Extremely tricky maze game involving the player controlling two shields, and collecting masks through 15 mazes, which increase in complexity as you progress. Also in later stages, fish and chickens lie in wait, often blocking the masks and just waiting to fall on you and bring your quest to a premature end. Later still, things hot up as bombs, transporters and dolls conspire against you. Smooth scrolling, simple graphics, this one requires planning to complete successfully.

SPECIALS

Original works that are simply unclassifiable feature in this section.

ATF

Digital Integration ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £12.95dk● Spectrum £8.95cs £13.95dk

Excellent combat/flight simulator that's a bit of a change for Digital Integration, the simulation specialist. The emphasis is on solid action, the result being a sure-fire hit.
★ ACE RATED 956 - SPECTRUM

DARK SIDE

Incentive ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk● Spectrum £9.95cs £14.95dk

The second game using the Freescape programming system, which sets more of an arcade challenge. The 3-D graphics are again superb as are the tasks and puzzles.
★ ACE RATED 915 - AMSTRAD

ELITE

Firebird ● C64 £14.95cs £17.95dk ● Amstrad £12.95cs £14.95dk● Spectrum £14.95cs ● BBC £13.95cs £14.95dk (available from Superior software)

Still the best space trading game, Elite set a standard for other companies to follow. One of the first space games to use vector graphics, it's a shooting and trading effort set across several galaxies, with plenty of variety to the game play. You can trade legal goods in (relatively) safe systems, or run the gauntlet of pirates in the galaxies' danger spots with your hold full of contraband. Either way there's a nice line in zero-G dogfighting, and as big a task as you'll find anywhere.
★ ACE CLASSIC

INCREDIBLE SHRINKING SPHERE

Electric Dreams ● C64 £8.99cs £14.99dk ● Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £24.99dk

A manic maze world where mass, size and inertia combine to provide wicked gameplay. Tricky puzzles and endless nasty obstacles will have you rolling around in delight.
★ ACE RATED 923 - C64

MAGNETRON-

Firebird ● C64 £8.95cs £12.95dk ● Spectrum £8.95cs £12.95dk

Puzzles and action Steve Turner style. Save the world by dismantling eight satellites. Steal parts from enemy droids to upgrade your own droid and hopefully make your job a little easier. The ideal game for Quazatron fans looking for a similar, new challenge.
★ ACE RATED 904 - SPECTRUM

QUEDEX

Thalamus ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk

In this impressively challenging game you must steer a metallic ball through ten different screens of mazes, bonuses and obstacles, all within a set time limit. This simple game concept has a host of added features to make it particularly pleasing: you can carry over unused time to the next screen, for example, and tackle the different screens or 'planes' in any order you wish. Excellent graphics and utterly absorbing play.
★ ACE RATED 934 - C64

SPINDIZZY

Electric Dreams ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Spectrum £9.95cs ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95 Disk

Tremendous stuff; steer your spinning top over tough obstacles and collect jewels, against a fiendish time limit. The game landscape is a vast system of catwalks, ramps, towers and trampolines surrounded by lethal drops - and NO safety rails. Floor switches activate lifts and bridge traps, but tripping them in the right order can be harder than it looks. A few bad guys and a lot of nice touches, but the explorations the thing.
★ ACE CLASSIC

STARGLIDER II

Rainbird ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● Amiga £24.99dk

One of the finest examples of a game using vector graphics to their full advantage, gets the solid 3D treatment and comes out looking every bit a winner. You've got a large task to complete and there's plenty of Egron's to destroy, making this combination of blasting and exploration that stands head above the competition.
★ ACE RATED 927 - ST

TAU CETI/ ACADEMY

CRL ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Spectrum £9.95cs ● Atari ST £19.99dk ● Amiga £19.95

Flight simulator/shoot 'em up and its sequel which are both incredibly smooth and well put together. The attention to detail is impeccable as you set off on hair-raising missions as a space cadet. In Academy you get to design your own space skimmer craft as well.
★ ACE CLASSIC

WARNING!

Games can damage your health. ACE recently handed a copy of *Ultima V* (see the RPG section on the next page) to a member of a leading City institution who 'never played games.' The gentleman, unfortunately, had a PC at home.

When we attempted to contact the man the next day, we were told he was 'off sick'. He remained on the sick list for three weeks. At the end of the three weeks, ACE received a complete guide to...*Ultima V*...

TOTAL ECLIPSE

Incentive ● C64 £9.95cs £12.95dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £12.95dk ● Spectrum £9.95cs £14.95dk

The third game using the Freescape system is a bit of a departure from the first two, but it's still an incredible game. In total eclipse you're battling against time back in the 1930's trying to prevent the moon exploding. For arcade adventurers who love puzzles, the Freescape system is a godsend.
★ ACE RATED 907 - AMSTRAD

WIZBALL

OCEAN ● C64 £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs $12.95dk ● Spectrum £8.95cs £14.95dk

Become Wizball and conquer the 'colour creatures' which are intent on eliminating the spectrum and rendering the landscape grey and drab. One of the most playable games around, despite the simple scenario.
ACE Classic

'Ere, You!!

**Did you fill in the questionnaire on page 86??
£££ of software can be won by those who tell us their deepest, darkest secrets...**

RPG

Role-playing games have exerted an enormous influence on modern game-styles. They combine the atmosphere of text adventures with the action of arcade games and the brain exercise of strategy – but their graphical presentatio tends to be weaker than other game genres. Gameplay centres around developing characters by raising their experience and skill levels in conflict with other, computer-controlled nasties. All that – and a quest too....

THE BARD'S TALE II

Electronic Arts, C64 £16.95, Amiga £24.95dk

The highly successful predecessor to Bards Tale III. BT II has the advantage of being slightly easier to advance. THe Amiga version features some very nice sampled monk chants when you enter a temple and excellently coloured graphics. And of course, you can update your favourite characters, their attributes and equipment for use in BT III.

★ ACE RATED 920

THE BARD'S TALE III

Electronic Arts ● C64 £14.95dk

The latest *Bard's Tale* game offers a number of refinements over its predecessors (all of which are still well worth taking a good look at). First, the graphics are better animated. Second, there are ranged combat routines which take careful account of the distance between you and your opponents. Finally, the game's large and represents excellent value for money.

★ ACE RATED 920

BATTLETECH

Infocom, PC £29.95, ST

Battletech features some incredible cartoon sequences, arcade style action, role play and strategy. In short a complete, full game. A brilliant RPG purchase even though it missed out on an Ace rating.

★ ACE RATED 801

DUNGEON MASTER

Electronic Arts ● C64 £14.95dk

Quoted as being a 'milestone in Advanced Computer Entertainment', *Dungeon Master* offers 14 levels, loads of spells, atmospheric graphics and sound. All going to make *Dungeon Master* one of the best roleplaying adventures to have appeared on any machine.

★ ACE RATED 949

POOL OF RADIANCE

US GOLD /SSI ● C64 £14.99dk

SSI were very brave to attempt to capture the complex concept of the AD&D system on a computer, but they managed superbly. An RPG-influenced game that will appeal to not only AD&D fans but to anyone looking for an enthralling game that will keep them playing for months.

★ ACE RATED 921

ULTIMA V

OriginSystems/Microprose ● C64 £24.95dk ● PC £29.95 ● ST/Amiga to be announced

Astonishing level of detail in this role-playing influenced epic. Travel round Britannia trashing the opposition and learning the magical, tactical, and geographical secrets that will enable you to defeat the forces of evil far underground. Superb romp, great lasting interest, and tough challenges galore.

★ ACE RATED 928

WASTELAND

Electronic Arts ● C64 £14.95dk

Charge around irradiated USA whopping mutant bunnies and biker scum in this role-playing epic. The atmosphere may not be as good as the *Bard's Tale* series of games, but the extra dimension of strategy leaves the cut, slash and spell scenario of the *BT* series way behind.

★ ACE RATED 921

BRAIN GAMES

Fed up with mindless blasting? Want a game that offers you an opponent who's worthy of your skills? Then this is your section...

CHESS MASTER 2000

Electronic Arts ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Amiga £24.95dk ● Atari ST £24.95dk ● IBM PC £24.95dk

Strongest chess game on the Amiga, with excellent graphics, 2D or 3D viewpoint, 12 levels of difficulty and all the playing options you could wish for. Plus some fairly nifty speech synthesis.

★ ACE CLASSIC

COLOSSUS CHESS 4

CDS ● C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk● Spectrum £9.95

Best bet for 8-bit machine owners, with a choice of 2D or 3D view, umpteen levels of difficulty, and a myriad options which enable you to play, watch, work out chess problems, etc against a fine computer opponent.

★ ACE CLASSIC

COLOSSUS MAH JONG

CDS ● C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk ● Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk

Rummy-like oriental game of strategy and chance. A tutor program and a short manual make this an easy to use and highly entertaining piece of software for veterans and novices alike..

★ ACE RATED 937 - C64

INFOGRAMES' BRIDGE

Infogrames ● Amstrad £12.95cs £15.95dk ● MSX £12.95

Graphically the best of all contract bridge simulations, with large playing cards depicted against a suitably green baize background. Plays a good game (for a computer, which after all is a bit short in the imangination and flair department), and features a wide range of options and bidding conventions which you can toggle of according to your style.

★ ACE CLASSIC

POWERPLAY

Arcana ● C64 £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £8.95cs £14.95dk ● Amiga £19.95dk ● Atari ST £19.95dk

If you want to try out your general knowledge, we reckon you'd be better off with this original and challenging combination of strategy game and quiz than with the admittedly monster selling Trivial Pursuits. Powerplay is graphically very pretty in its setting on Mount Olympus, home of the Gods.

★ ACE RATED 935 - Amiga

SCRABBLE

Leisure Genius ● C64 £12.95cs £14.95dk ● Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95 ● IBM PC £24.95dk

The hugely popular word game translated very successfully onto the micro. Fast, excellent display, and a suprisingly large vocabulary (even if it does include some strange looking words on some occasions). Good enough to give even strong human opponents a tough game at the higher levels.

★ ACE CLASSIC

WAR GAMES

Fancy yourself as a master of grand strategy, marshalling hordes of troops and sending them of to do battle on your behalf? Look no further than the ACE war games section...

ARNHEM

CCS, Spectrum £8.95cs, Amstrad £9.95cs, C64 £9.95cs

One of the oldest quality wargames featured in the section, Arnham was easioly the best in the field. It has all the expected atmosphere, five seperate scenarios and one of the toughest computer opponents you could ever wa't to meet. A thoroughly absobing wargame which can be classed as one of the old masters.

★ ACE RATED 910

CONFLICT EUROPE

Mirrorsoft, ST 24.99, Amiga £24.99, PC TBA

The 16 bit progression of Theatre Europe. Lots of extra graphical and sound effects. The computer controlled intelligence was marginally sophisticated but still enough to give a challenging game. The correct balance between strategy and exitement throughout. Great for beginners and intermediate players.

★ ACE RATED 882

THEATRE EUROPE

PSS, Spectrum £9.95cs, C64 £0.95cs £14.95dk, Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk

The perfect game for 8 bit owners who go green with envy when they look at Conflict Europe. Theatre Europe is the forerunner to the excellent 16 bit game. The graphics and overall play are not as sophisticated, but on the whole it still is one heck of a game.

★ ACE RATED 915

UMS

Rainbird, ST £24.95, PC £24.95, Macintosh £34.95, Amiga £24.95

Probably the greatest war game to date. UMS' uniqe 3D systems enables the creation of almost any battle in history. As well as a very sophisticated computer opponents yet. On top of this are add on scenarios and a very neat contruction kit to keep you going for even longer. An essential purchase

★ ACE RATED 907

TURTLESOFT

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AMIGA/ATARI GAMES SOFTWARE

	ST	AMIGA
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Albedo	13.95	13.95
Alien Syndrome	9.99	9.99
Alpine Games	6.99	–
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Archipelagos	16.95	16.95
Artura	–	15.95
African Raiders	13.95	13.95
Alien Legion	–	16.95
Arthur	–	16.95
A.P.B.	13.95	14.95
Baal	15.95	–
Battlehawks 1942	19.95	19.95
Balance of Power 1990	16.95	20.95
Ballistix	13.95	13.95
Barbarian 2	13.95	16.95
Bards Tale 2	16.95	16.95
Batman	13.95	16.95
Basket Ball	18.95	18.95
Bismark	16.95	16.95
Beach Volleyball	18.95	18.95
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Bloodwych	18.95	18.95
Bombuzal	13.95	13.95
Borrodino	20.95	–
Bridge Player 2000	14.95	15.95
Bubble Bobble	13.95	–
Battle Chess	18.95	18.95
Battletech	20.95	20.95
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CONSOLE WARS

Console war is about to break out in the high street with the Sega, Nintendo and Konix all jockeying for shelf space in the run up to Christmas. The PC Engine (and the PC Engine Plus – see pages 27-30) will also be available in certain specialist shops. Next year will herald the arrival of the Sega Mega Drive and portable consoles like the Game Boy and Atari Lynx. All machines sport a library of impressive games. Here is ACE's Top Five for each system.

NINTENDO

SUPER MARIO BROS

The undisputed king of cutesy platform-style arcade adventures. Many a game fan bought their Nintendo just to be able to play *Super Mario Bros* – which is packed free with the console. It looks dead simple as Princess Daisy pleads "Save me Mario, save me" at the beginning. But simple it certainly is not – with eight levels, each containing four separate worlds to be explored. The game is crammed with secret levels, 'warps' and hidden treats such that you never tire of playing it.

ACE Rating 955

SUPER MARIO BROS II

Takes the same story line as the first game – Princess Daisy is in trouble again and it's Mario to the rescue. The game play is entirely different. You have to collect things as you travel – 'vials' will enable you to open the doors to the secret levels and coins are useful at the end of the game as you can use them to play the slot machines. This time Mario can protect himself by picking up objects and lobbing them at his enemies. Excellent fun, particularly when Mario confronts the giant frog at the end of the game.

ACE Rating 910

MIKE TYSON'S PUNCH OUT

Bashes the proverbial s@*t out of any other home boxing game on any other console or computer. Proof that even if Nintendo's hardware may be technologically naff, they can still squeeze an excellent game onto a cartridge. You face six opponents before coming up against Tyson. All of the punches, ducking and diving are extremely responsive. There are also lots of humorous touches.

ACE Rating 920

GRADIUS

The best shoot 'em-up currently available on PAL. There are others going through but this one is by far the best of the current range. Based on the 1987 coin-up with lots of power ups and progressive difficulty levels. Very small targets require accurate shooting and precise flight control. Extremely un-putdownable shoot 'em-up.

ACE Rating 890

LEGEND OF ZELDA

Golden cartridge and a massive manual sort of make up for the hefty £40 price tag on this game. The control pad enables you to travel the extensive land and make icon-selections to take part in this role-playing epic. Proof that consoles can be just as good at role-playing games as they are for arcade entertainment.

ACE Rating 905

PC ENGINE

R-TYPE I/II

Slightly annoying that you have to purchase two cards to get all eight levels. They do provide excellent entertainment once you get them up and running on your Engine. Identical to the Irem coin-op in every detail. Some *R-Type* officiandos actually prefer the Engine version to the arcade. Do battle with the evil Bydo Empire. Some of the best thought out power-ups and end level nasties ever to appear on this type of game. Arguably the best coin-op conversion ever seen on a home system.

ACE Rating 940

WORLD TENNIS

World Tennis is the PC Engine at its sporting best. To get maximum enjoyment out of the game you need a four player joystick adaptor. Get this, and four of you can enjoy a game of doubles. The game has everything – superb graphics, top spin, drop shots, volleys and totally convincing 3D screen separation. As if that were not enough, an arcade adventure is also thrown in for good measure.

ACE Rating 935

MR HELI

This 1988 Irem coin-op is another near perfect conversion on the PC Engine. Pilot your cartoon-style chopper through the devilishly complex cavern – destroying enemy bases and collecting fuel capsules. A superlative conversion.

ACE Rating 890

GUNHED

For prettiness, speed and sheer blasting entertainment Gunhed is probably the best shoot 'em-up for the Engine. The objective is to destroy eight space fortresses in a vertically scrolling landscape. The metallic ships, alien laser flak and power ups are a visual delight.

ACE Rating 900

FINAL LAP

A superlative Namco racing game. A split screen presentation is selectable for a two player head to head, up to sixteen Grand Prix circuits can be chosen from (many of them famous tracks), and there are twenty six other cars to be lapped as you attempt to get into pole position.

ACE Rating 940

SEGA MASTER

WORLD SOCCER

Until *Kick Off* came along for the ST and Amiga this was the ACE fave soccer game. It has superb playability due to the accuracy of the player control of the ball, passing and shooting. It even has a penalty shoot out option for drawn cup ties.

ACE Rating 910

YS

A huge scrolling world has to be explored, characters can be questioned, goods can be purchased in medieval villages, and a good deal of role-playing depth is packed into the game.

ACE Rating 920

WONDER BOY III

The Wonder Boy series was Sega's answer to cutesy Taito coin-op hits like *Bubble Bobble* and *New Zealand Story*. WB has been turned into a Dragon and must find Salamander Sword to turn himself back into a Wonder Boy. Platform, shoot 'em up of the highest order.

ACE Rating 915

R-TYPE

An excellent stab at converting this classic Irem shoot 'em up. All of the levels are there, even the giant green space ship on level three – albeit a bit glitchy. Highly recommended.

ACE Rating 900

CALIFORNIA GAMES

The classic Epyx laid-back sports simulation. Surfing, BMX'ing, hack sacking, skate boarding and roller skating. Superb graphics on the Sega – and bags of fun. Our fave is the surfing level, but they are all excellent.

ACE Rating 930

SEGA MEGADRIVE

THUNDERFORCE

Of the few Mega Drive games to turn up in the import shops, *Thunderforce* is the one that proves that the PC Engine will have some serious competition from this machine in 1990. It scrolls in eight directions on certain levels – with excellent power-ups that spray flak like a fire work display all over the screen. You have to play it loud – like a Megadeath album – as the sound chip in the Mega Drive has to be heard to be believed.

ACE Rating 930

ALTERED BEAST

The Sega coin-op with the famous rolling eyes on the title screen has never played better on any home system. The sprites are so huge, colourful and detailed that you can almost feel every punch and kick as you battle through the levels.

ACE Rating 940

SPACE HARRIER II

There are 12 levels of action to blast your way through the Mega Drive conversion of the classic Sega shoot 'em-up. Your hero takes to the skies with a jet pack on his back and bazooka slung across his arm. The 3D scrolling terrain, with its chequered floor and horizon that appears deep in the screen make for a 3D sensation rarely achieved on a home game.

ACE Rating 930

GHOULS'N'GHOSTS

The sequel to *Ghosts 'n'Goblins* has not long been in the arcades but already the Mega Drive conversion is ready. It looks indistinguishable from the arcade original as you fight your way through its five levels, in a quest to rescue the princess.

ACE Rating 895

SUPER THUNDERBLADE

Captures for the first time all of the speed and enjoyment of the arcade original as you take to the skies in your attack chopper. Once again – play it loud.

Ace Rating 880

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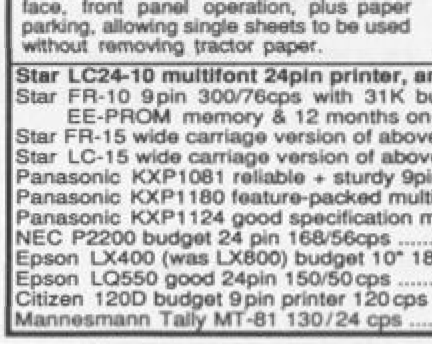

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BUGGY BONANZA

To help celebrate the launch of its *Drivin' Force* racing-sim, unpretentious games developer Digital Magic Software is generously giving away TEN Buggy kit cars to ACE readers...

Drivin' Force is one of the many racing-sims vying for pole-position in the Christmas games race, so to make it stand out from the crowd Digital Magic Software has some unique features, including the ability to drive a truck, formula one car, bike, car, buggy and even a jet-ski. *Drivin' Force* uses a new graphic animation technique to give it an arcade feel - in terms of both appearance and speed - which DMS hopes to utilise in its future releases. *Drivin' Force* will be on sale next month for ST (£19.95) and Amiga (£24.95). In the meantime, here's your chance to play around with a nifty little piece of buggy kit, courtesy of the guys at DMS...

To win a Dandy Dash buggy kit car from Nikko, all you have to do is find SIX special words (three relate to Digital Magic Software, the other three are vehicles found in *Drivin' Force*) hidden in the word grid below.

Write down the six words on the back of a postcard (including your full name and address) and send it to: BUGGY BONANZA, ACE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Entries must be with us by 2nd November.

A	N	S	N	C	M	P	B	C	Y	P	Z	C	C
J	Z	B	R	T	C	E	F	A	E	C	A	C	X
U	E	Y	X	F	D	C	F	E	M	C	F	K	E
Z	Y	T	S	G	E	N	X	K	J	C	Z	I	C
P	A	C	S	C	C	R	P	I	C	N	P	S	R
V	C	I	B	K	N	D	T	B	E	H	P	I	C
C	Y	W	D	X	I	V	D	R	H	C	W	C	F
R	R	G	B	F	C	T	H	C	F	G	K	L	N
Y	B	S	G	Z	R	Z	D	T	I	I	S	X	I
C	C	D	A	L	P	T	S	C	L	U	M	G	V
P	C	J	C	A	B	C	C	M	K	V	J	L	I
C	X	K	S	H	A	P	C	G	N	I	C	A	R
B	E	F	T	F	E	L	M	K	C	G	J	R	D
I	U	C	U	N	D	M	J	L	L	V	L	M	E

TAKE IT IN 'YER STRIDE

Good old US Gold is flushed with the success of its latest chartbusting Capcom coin-op conversion, *Strider*. In fact, USG is so pleased with the favourable response to *Strider* that it is giving away TEN free *Strider* T-shirts and TEN free *Strider* posters...

Available across all major formats, the 910-rated *Strider* (see review in last month's ACE, page 47) is the latest, and possibly the best, Capcom coin-op conversion ever - and that's quite a feat considering some of Capcom's previous gaming blockbusters like *Commando*, *Ghosts'n'Goblins* and *Forgotten Worlds*.

So what could be better than being seen around town wearing your very own *Strider* T-shirt, or what about inviting a few friends round for drink, chat and a glimpse of your new *Strider* poster decorating the wall (and hiding the damp patch)? Here's all you have to do to make your dreams come true...

THE COMPETITION

Just answer the three easy questions below, and include a gameplaying tip on your favourite US Gold game (for instance, what's the easiest way to complete *California Games*, or have you found a hidden cheat mode in *Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade*?):

Which of the following games is not a Capcom coin-op?

(a) Commando (b) Ghosts'n'Goblins (c) Terminator

2. Who produced the Forgotten World's coin-op?

(a) Capgold (b) Capcom (c) US Comcap

3. Where does Capcom come from?

(a) Japan (b) Southend-on-Sea (c) Florida

Send your answers on a postcard to:

TAKE IT IN 'YER STRIDE, ACE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU.
Don't forget to include your full name, address and that US Gold gameplaying tip. Entries must reach us by 2nd November.

ABSOLUTELY FOOTBALL CRAZY!

If the football season just isn't exciting enough for you (know what we mean Spurs supporters?) you may be able to lift your soccer blues with the latest release from fledgling software games company, Impressions. *Super-League Soccer* is a "totally new generation" of football management simulations combining the very best features of old generation footie management sims with a wealth of stunning new features, including full player control and a vast array of player details. *Super-League Soccer* is available now for Spectrum/C64 (£9.99 cassette) and ST/Amiga (£24.99 disk).

But enough of this free Impressions publicity, what's in it for you? Well, just to get you in the soccer mood, Impressions is giving away TEN free Subbuteo kits (complete with green table cloth and goalies with

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ACCESS AND VISA CARDS ACCEPTED

handles attached to their feet) and TEN free pairs of footie socks (odd colours of course). You'll be over the moon, Brian!

So how do you win such a utterly brilliant prize? It's easy, just answer the following question:

Who was the first football personality to be linked with a computer game?

Answers on a postcard (including your full name and address) to: ABSOLUTELY FOOTBALL CRAZY!, ACE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R -3AU. Entries to reach us by 2nd November.

INTO THE VALLEY...

Hewson's *Battle Valley* is a tasty treat for any Amiga owner wanting to get a little bit more from a shoot'em-up. And now, thanks to ACE and Hewson here's your chance to tuck into TEN free copies of *Battle Valley* on the Amiga...

Reviewed in last month's ACE (page 72), 815-rated *Battle Valley* is a strategic shoot'em-up placing you in control of a speedy attack helicopter and a mobile armoured vehicle in a heroic attempt to thwart a deadly terrorist attack. Featuring an impressive three level parallax scroll, booming sound FX and a decent depth of gameplay, *Battle Valley* gives any self-respecting Amiga gamester a run for their money.

Fancy testing *Battle Valley* out for yourself? Then just answer the three ever-so-simple questions below - plus, include a gameplaying tip on your favourite Hewson game (for instance: what's the hidden cheat mode in *Cybernoid*, or how do you get past the end of level 3 guardian in *Astaroth*?)...

1. In the movie *Battle Beyond the Stars*, which actor from the TV show *The Waltons* played the lead role (note: you can use his/her character name from *The Waltons*)?

2. How many people rode into the Valley of Death?

3. What Hewson game features an armoured vehicle, an attack helicopter and a multitude of terrorists?

Send your entries on the back of a postcard (including your full name, address and that Hewson gameplaying tip) to: INTO THE VALLEY..., ACE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, LONDON EC1R 3AU. Closing date for the competition is 2nd November

LISTS

Another batch of informative, interesting, intelligent and completely useless ACE lists, compiled by the ACE staff on their way to work this morning.

FIVE PHONE MESSAGES RECEIVED BY US TODAY

1 Em, er, oh just forget it.
2 Why haven't you reviewed Starglider III yet?
3 One chicken chow-mein, special fried rice and some prawn crackers.
4 What's Jane Smith's telephone number?
5 Er, em, it's me again, what does Old Groper look like?

OUR THREE FAVOURITE CHARACTERS FROM A TV CARTOON SERIES

1 Slimer from The Real Ghostbusters.
2 Muttely from Wacky Races.
3 Shaggy from Scooby Doo.

OUR THREE LEAST FAVOURITE PC

CHARACTERS FROM A TV CARTOON SERIES

1 Penelope Pitsop from Wacky Races.
2 All Smurfs.
3 Panthro from Thundercats.

Do you think you can do better? Of course you can! So get writing to

LISTS, ACE, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane,
LONDON EC1R 3AU.

STOP PRESS

SHOW'S LAST STAND

If you are reading you this at the PC Show- taking a quick coffee break, pint break, or stale, plastic-clad sandwich break, and feeling completely knackered and wondering why you bothered in the first place then worry no more. This is likely to be the last PC Show you will have to attend.

The show organisers - Montbuild are not running a PC Show next year and V.N.U (publishers of Personal Computer World magazine) do not have access to either Earls Court or Olympia next September - the month in which the show is traditionally held.

But just in case this news might make you go home happy I am sad to have to inform you that there are plans afoot - as you sup, chomp, and wonder how you are going to get home to stage the invent again next year.

EMAP International Exhibition - (part of the same company that owns ACE) plan to step in with a rescue bid. Informed sources suggest that EMAP are prepared to stump up a whopping £350,000 to spend on advertising for a new games only show. The working title for the new show is "The European Computer Leisure Show".

If EMAP can pull the show off it will be a considerable achievement as only two years ago they ended up with huge omelttes on their faces after a disasterous attempt to sell an alternative show at Ally Pally - in North London.

The new PC show - as EMAP are billing it, is believed to have the backing of a national newspaper group. EMAP sources will not confirm which newspaper group - though it is unlikely to be the Mirror Group.

MAXWELL CLOSES MICRODEALER

The long established Microdealer distributor has ceased trading as of the week before the PC Show.

The Maxwell owned distributor was one of the longest established firms in the computer games industry and the shock waves of their closure are only just becoming known.

Tongues have been wagging throughout the PC Show of the effect the closure will have on Mirrorsoft - publishers of Spectrum Holobyte, Image Works, and Cinemaware games.

The Maxwell Group have already disposed of a number of companies in order to fund a £3 billion expansion plan.

16 BIT GAMES FOR LESS THAN A FIVER

Three industry worthies last week caused a stir by appearing naked in an advertisement in the computer games business trade journal (Computer Trade Weekly) to advertise a new range of budget software for under a fiver.

The label is to be called 16 Blitz (I bet you didn't know that that was what they were going the call The One magazine, did you?) and will have some darned impressive re-releases in its list of offerings. Watch out for Tetris, and Spy II amongst a host of others.

EPYX CONSOLE THEMSELVES AFTER MASSIVE JOB CUTS

The one time leading Californian software house - Epyx - have layed off fifty staff and announced that they will cease publishing computer games. The company will now concentrate on developing games for othe publishers - particularly Nintendo titles, and on the development of the Atari Lynx hand held, originally an Epyx design.

Meanwhile the latest trade gossip from the US suggests that the Nintendo Game Boy is streaking ahead of the Lynx in the popularity league - with both trade and punter alike.

EUROPEAN COMPUTER ZOO

Former UK boss of Microdealer, Stuart Bell, has quit the company to set up hiw own computer games company - interestingly named European Computer Zoo. The rumour mill has it that Bell will be taking with him certain key staff at Microprose.

Bell claims that the company have ten new games ready to publish.

Microprose have yet to announced a replacement to head up their five-label, Tetbury-based games company. (Lables include Micro Status, Microstyle, Microprose, Firebird , and Rainbird -at the last count)

BILLY THE FISH IS FULL OF WIND

Amongst a deluge of new Viz Comic merchandise is the Billy the Fish inflatable. A definite must for any trendy lager lout on the terraces this Winter. If Billy the Fish is not to your taste you might like to put the following items on your Christmas list Víz Book of Crap Jokes, Fat Slags T Shirt, Viz 1990 Callendar, Johhny Fartpants Boxer Shorts, and Sid The Sexist Condoms. The next editon of Viz Comic will be on sale in mid-October.

WINNING STREAK!

Mad Surgeon Competition

Judging by the large number of entries for our Mad Surgeon Compo, Ace readers are a pretty bloodthirsty bunch who obviously can't wait to start hacking away with the trusty scalpel. The five lucky would-be Dr.Kildare's, who each win a copy of Software Toolwork's *Life & Death* game are: J.P.Rutherford of Sarf London, S.France of Guernsey, S.Lodge of West Yorkshire, R.Harathalu of Scotland, and Kerry Robertson of Lincolnshire.

Your games are winging their way to you even now. Good luck with med. school. Oh, and try not to make too much of a mess on the carpet...

Lifetime Drive Compo

It's quite amazing just what you can do with a publicity shot if you try hard. Here's what the five lucky winners of MGT's Lifetime Drives made of this one.

'Well Miles, I knew it was a mistake to sell our disc drive through "Liberty's" — N.Tyrrell, London.

"And all because the lady loves Software Centres" — Steve Wood, Wolverhampton.

"And all because the lady loves... other ladies dressed as men" — Jason Forster, Heywood.

"When they said I'd won a Lifetime Drive I instantly thought of a Red Convertible and a long road" — Chris Cole, Plymouth.

"'Can I put my floppy into your Lifetime Drive Port?' 'Not until I've seen the result of your RAM test.'" — W.Hill, Deal.

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CROSSWORD 17

■	O	■	R	■	■	■	■	■	P	■	S	■
A	B	R	A	M	S	■	S	C	R	E	E	N
■	S	■	S	■	T	■	C	■	I	■	G	■
■	E	■	T	H	E	K	R	I	S	T	A	L
■	R	■	A	■	P	■	O	■	O	■	■	■
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C	I	N	E	M	A	W	A	R	E	■	A	■
■	C	■	N	■	T	■	T	■	B	■	M	■
B	O	T	T	L	E	■	E	X	O	D	U	S
■	N	■	S	■	■	■	■	■	X	■	S	■

CROSSWORD CRAZY

You might have noticed that Crossword Solutions in recent issues have been, well, lacking really. Sorry! We've been so busy here at ACE since our move to EMAP that some compo results have got a little behind. But, as you can see we are celebrating November with a grand catch up. So here goes with the solutions and winners for crosswords 15, 16, and 17.

Crossword 15

ACROSS. 5.ICONS 7. NEBULUS 9.TREE 10.RENEGADE 11.ROBTEK 14.SUMMIT 17.PACMANIA 18.STEP 19.TRANTOR 20.TENON

DOWN. 1.ENTERTAINMENT 2.BEANO 3.DUNGEON MASTER 4.MUDDY 6.CURSOR 8.BRAKE 12.ASIAN 13.GI HERO 15.BAIRD 16.ANTON

The winner is Bradley Howe from Harlington, Middlesex.

Crossword 16 (A)

ACROSS. 5.HYSTERIA 7.ATOM 8.METRE 9.EDUCATE 10.MAELSTROM 11.I LUDICRUS 14.EPISODE 15.AMIGA 17.MEAN 18.EXTENSOR

DOWN. 1.BYTE 2.RAIDER 3.CAPCOM 4.HOSTAGES 10.MELAPLEX 11.INSANE 12.UNDIES 13.ROMAN

The winner is Steve Wood of Wolverhampton.

Crossword 16 (B)

ACROSS. 6.VROOM 7.TYPHOON 8.OCEAN 9.FERRARI 11.BLOOD MONEY 13.VERMINATOR 16.PREDICT 17.RAMBO 18.DETOURS 19.TITUS

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PRIZE PUZZLES

Now that we've cleared the backlog of Crosswords, here are a few oustanding prize puzzle solutions.

Puzzle 16

Answer:

```
   423
   511
  2115
   423
    423
216153
```

Solution:

The problem is to find two three-digit numbers which have a product in which the second digit is a '1'. Further, all digits used, including those in the three subtotals, must consist of only digits from 1 to 6 inclusive (i.e. those numbers which can be represented by the dots on a standard dice).

For the purposes of the problem the subroutine at line 1000 tests a given variable (Z$) to determine if it contains digits other than those permitted. The subroutine returns a varaiable FLAG which has a value of zero if the string under test contains only the digits 1 to 6. A value of 1 indicates that the test has failed.

The initial variables are generated by the two loops A and B. Each is tested by the subroutine and line 140 also checks that the product will have six digits, as required by the puzzle. once a possible pair of numbers has been found the three sub-totals are calculated (C$, D$, and E$ at lines 170 to 230). Each of these is also tested by the subroutine in turn. Should any value fail then the next value of B is taken. Finally, the product is tested, first by the subroutine and secondly to check that the second digit is a '1'. Line 290 then prints out the values which pass all of these tests.

```
100 FOR A=111 TO 666:A$=STR$(A)
110 Z$=A$:GOSUB 1000
120 IF FLAG=1 THEN 310
130 FOR B=111 TO 666:B$=STR$(B)
140 IF A*B<111111 THEN 300
150 Z$=B$:GOSUB 1000
160 IF FLAG=1 THEN 300
170 V=VAL(MID$(B$,2,1)):D$=STR$(A*V)
180 Z$=C$:GOSUB 1000
190 IF FLAG=1 THEN 300
200 V=VAL(MID$(B$,2,1)):D$=STR$(A*V)
210 Z$=D$:GHOSUB 1000
220 IF FLAG=1 THEN 300
230 V=VAL(MID$(B$,3,1)):E$=STR$(A*V)
240 Z$=E$:GOSUB 1000
250 IF FLAG=1 THEN 300
260 F$=STR$(A*B)
270 Z$=F$:GOSUB 1000
280 IF FLAG=1 THEN 300
290 IF MID$(F$,2,1)="1" THEN PRINT
A$;" :'B$;" ";F$
300 NEXT B
310 NEXT A
320 END
1000 FLAGS=0
1010 Z=INSTR(Z$,"0")
1020 IF Z<>0 THEN FLAG=1:GOTO
1090
1030 Z=INSTR(Z$,"7")
1040 IF Z<>0 THEN FLAG=1:GOTO
1090
1050 Z=INSTR(Z$,"8")
1060 IF Z<>0 THEN FLAG=1:GOTO
1090
1070 Z=INSTR(Z$,"9")
1080 IF Z<>0 THEN FLAG=1:GOTO
1090
1090 RETURN
```

Megasave

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CD ROM EXTRAVAGANZA

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for — the results of our grand CD ROM giveaway. We had a laugh a minute weekend reading all of your entries, and went through agony trying to make a decision. But here it is: The lucky winner of a Commodore PC 10 with Hitachi CDR 1503S and a copy of the CD Defender of the Crown, is T.Hartley of Yoevil, Somerset.

Twenty runners-up, who all receive copies of Cinemaware's latest blockbuster, *Lords of the Rising Sun* are: Jason Burgwin, Walsall; Gordon Hayes, Pontyclun; Richard Taylor, Bradford; Dave Mills, Birmingham; Matthew Treadwell, Chertsey; Iain Mcgregor, Ayr; Rick Cary, Llandysul; G.Hurd, Isle of Man; David Gray, Southall; Peter Wognum, Billericay; Simon Coillis, Beverley; John Hegarty, Hounslow; Andrew J. Reader, Maidstone; R.J.East, Oxford; Craig Wheeler, Tavistock; S.E.Button, Bristol; Stephen Parsons, Wool; Neil Luckman, Birmingham; Ian Wang, Lightwater; and A.Bogue, Stourport.

Here for your delight and delectation is the winning entry:

"I couldn't wait to get home and load my latest Cinemaware CD ROM game, and I wasn't disappointed! It was the latest licensing deal: 'Dallas — The Computer Game.' I controlled the hero, Bobby, as he raced to the rescue of his wife Pam. She was in the clutches of an evil plastic surgeon, intent on changing her into someone completely different. This horizontally scrolling shoot-em-up had plenty of baddies to contend with — runaway cars, gun-toting, double-crossed oilmen and a sickly kid who could cause suffocation by clinging on tightly round the throat and lisping 'I lurve you Daa-dee'. But what I liked best was that it was impossible to die. Every time I lost a life, I found myself back in the shower. It was almost like a dream."

SPANISH FLY

Jetting off with a friend for this years Spanish Grand Prix is Gregory Alexander of North London, who correctly named five Accolade games in our Spain Competition. Congratulations to Alexander, and comiserations to the rest of you who'll just have to watch it on the telly...

FUN, FAME, AND FERRARIS

Winner of our System 3 competetion is C. Ambidge of Maidenhead. This lucky person recieves a free ride in one of the Ferraris belonging to System 3's Mark Cale, as well as a VIP meal, and other goodies. There is just one catch: we need a full report on the Editor's desk by next Monday! Oh alright, you can have a little longer then...

The winner is: A.J. Kidsley of Taunton, Somerset.

PUZZLE 17

Oh dear, puzzle 17 seems to have got lost somewher along the line. No prizes for spotting that there wasn't one!

PUZZLE 18

Answer: Apart from the example given (15 x 93 = 1395) there are six other ways to do the same trick:

21 x 60 = 1260
21 x 87 = 1827
27 x 81 = 2187
30 x 51 = 1530
35 x 41 = 1435
and 80 x 86 = 6880

Solution: The problem involves finding all possible combinations of two two-digit numbers, the product of which in each case comprises of the same digits. In the listing the two initial values are held by the two loops A and B. To avoid duplication of answers the value of B is always the greater of the two. The product of these two numbers is calculated (line 120) and this value and the values of A and B are converted to string variables.

To determine if the product consists of the same digits as its generating values a simple technique is used. First, the strings A$ and B$ are combined into a single string Z$ and this is passed to the subroutine at Lines 1000 to 1060. The purpose of the subroutine is to re-arrange the contents of the string Z$ into numerical order (actually determined by the ASCII codes of each character in the string). This is done by using a modified 'bubble-sort' in which each character in the string is compared with the next character along (line 1010). If these two characters are out of order line 1020 transposes them. When this happens a flag (F) is reset to 1 (line 1030). This procedure is repeated along the length of the string until no further switches of characters are made. This is indicated by the flag remaining at its initial value of zero. When this happens the subroutine is terminated.

The 're-order' digits returned from the subroutine are stored in variable C$ and the digits of the product are sent to the subroutine (line 1060). if the string so returned is identical with that in C$ then the contents of variables A and B are printed out.

```
100 FOR A=10 TO 99:A$=STR$(A)
110 FOR B=A TO 99:B$=STR$(B)
120 P=A*B:P$=STR$(P)
130 IF P<1000 THEN 180
140 Z$=A$+B$:GOSUB 1000
150 C$=Z$
160 Z$=P$:GOSUB 1000
170 IF C$=Z$ THEN PRINT A;"  ";B
180 NEXT B
190 NEXT A
200 END
1000 F=0:FOR G=1 TO 3
1010 IF
MID$(Z$,G,1)<=MID$(Z$,G+1,1) THEN
1040
1020 Z$=LEFT$(Z$,G-
1)+MID$(Z$,G+1,1)+MID$(Z$,G,1)+MID
$(Z$,G+2)
1030 F=1
1040 NEXT G
1050 IF F=1 THEN GOTO 1000
1060 RETURN
```

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```
    —2
    —3-
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HELPLINE

Amiga tips and cheats disk. Covers 50+ games. Send £3 and SAE to: Mr J Smith, 45 Maplecroft Crescent, Sheffield, S9 1DN.

HELP PLEASE!!! Does anyone know how to hack out that piece of mega music on the game ACE 2 on the commodore 64? Write to: H Fu, 59 Baden Powell Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire. S40 2SL.

CPC owners, lots of hints and maps, normal and multiface poker. If a program won't load I might be able to retrieve it in whole or in part. Ask for details first. (464 tape only) Screens and listings printed 10p per page. Tape to tape anything! Only 25p, money back if not successful! Write to: Jonathan Burton, 8 Delahays Drive, Hale, Altrincham, Cheshire. WA15 8DP. Please send and SAE and mark all letters 'ACE'.

HELP! Joe Y J C H lost your address. Please contact Andy B, 18 Lucan Road, Barnet, Herts. EN5 4HA.

ATARI 520 STFM, 4 joysticks, over £400 of software including 1st Word Plus (WP), STOS, Poplous R-Type, Dungeon Master, Oids, Xenon. All boxed as new. Worth over £800. Will sell for £350 ono. Phone (0372) 720690.

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I can offer help and step by step solution to the following games not less the 10 A4 for every game: King Quest 1, 2, 3, 4, Man Hunter, Gold Rush, Larry 1 and 2, Space Quest I, II, III, Police Quest I, II. If complete solution with map required send £2 to cover postage charges. Any IBM owners will be highly appreciated. Mohamad Saleh Gamil, PO Box 211733 Amman Jordan.

Amstrad CPC hints, tips, pokes on: Fast food, Dizzy, Wec Le Mans, SDI, After Burner, ISS, Vindicator, Ninja Scooter, Emlyn int Soccer, Renegade 3,Mask, Living Daylights, Treasure Island, Multface pokes, mixed sidc and tape. Pokes 25p each + SAE. Lee O'Connor, 18 Mount Road, New Malden, Surrey. KT3 3JU.

Lots of pokes and cheats written by enthusiastics for fun. They are all for recent games and are very useful. Available for 2 formats: Atari ST and Spectrum. If interested write to: Edwin Searancke, 'Church View', Pettycroft, Ruardean, Glos. GL17 9XH. Please state your machine. (SAE would be appreciated)

Wanted, HELP, I need to sell my Spectrum +2, do your want to buy it? £180 with lots of stuff. Phone (0304) 831015 for info.

I can't afford a computer due to local currency exchange rate. Extremely knock down price offer for any machine, neede badly. S Emevy, PO Box 50797, Falomo, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Help is desperately needed for Sega's Phantasy Star game. I have killed Lassic and now must report back to the Govenor, but I cannot find him. If you know his whereabouts, (he is NOT

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at his house), please write to me quickly. I am feeling somewhat suicidal at the moment, so I am offering a reward for the first correct reply I receive, and will reply to as many of the others as possible. I need accurate location please! D Cheatham, 81 Waingroves Road, Ripley, Derby. DE5 9TD. Write now! I may be able to help you with other Sega games.

HELP! HELP! For Zillion 2, Kenseiden, Rastan, Altered Beast, Spy vs Spy, F-16 Fighter, Pro Wrestling, Double Dragon, Thunderblade, Transpot, Shinobi, Wonderboy, Choplifter, Action Fighter, Black Belt. Please state which help you want. More games to be cheated soon. Send an SAE to Tip Ster, 93 Walnut Tree Road, Charlton Village, Shepperton, Middx. TW17 ORP.

Sega Cheats. We can help with many Sega games old and new. Hints, Cheats, maps, tips. The Ultimate in Sega. The Tipsters, 932 Walnut Tree Road, Charlton Village, Shepperton. TW17 ORP.

HELP given on Leisure Suit Larry I and II, Snowball, Shadow Gate, Legend of Sword, Corruption, The Pawn, Pool of Radiance, Panikos the Odosiou, 15B Petrou and Pavlou STR, Kapsalos, Limassol, Cyprus. Write toL S Antouiou, 14 Aristovoulou Street, P5 246 Limoussol, CYPRUS.

Stuck with a game? Need a desperate tip? Maybe even a cheat? Well, no need to fear! Write to: Tippy, 23 Dumbreck Place, Lenzie, Glasgow, Scotland, G66 5Pq. Tippy will try his best answering the problem. Open to all computers and consoles! Don't forget to include your address and also an SAE.

Help offered with: Zork 1, 2, 3 and 0, Beyond Zork, Enchanter, Scorceror, Spellbreaker, Starcross, Deadline, Suspended, Planetfall, Witness, Infidel, Seastalker, Cutthroats, Suspect, Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy, Ballyhoo, Moonmist, Trinity, A Mind Forever Voyaging, Leather Goddesses of Phobos, Hollywood Hinjinx, Bureaucracy, Lurking Horror, Stationfall, Plundered Hearts, Shogun, Border Zone, Sherlock, Journey, Battletech. Write to the Grue, 64 County Road, Ormiskirk, West Lancs. L39 1HQ. Enclosing a guaranteed response to all letters with SAE.

HELP! has anyone got the ST Cheats - made for Zenon? I'm suicidal . Also I would appreciate the cheat mode or tips for Prison. I've completed KQI and KQII (with a low score). Please can someone suply a complete solution of Guild of Theives and the cheat mode for Barbarian (Psynosis). Phone Tom on (060 872) 200 after 4.30pm, or (0608) 677 200 after 5pm. Thanks

Tips wanted for the Amiga version of Personal Night-

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Need help with solving Manhunter - New York, Dream Zone, Ingrid's Back and Maniac Mansion? I have also completed King's Quest II + III + IV, Police Quest I + II, + 300-400 points on Space Quest III. So, if you can give or need help, write to: Espen O Pedersen, 3624 Lyngdal, Norway.

Is it possible? Over 98 tips, pokes, maps, solutions, even cheat programes!! For all kinds of games, sorry but this is just small tips (sometimes solutions) out of mags, but well worth it!! (Only ST of Amiga) Just ask for Jeremy Tiptaker on: 01 445+5117, given tips from YOU gratefully accepted! Weekdays after 4pm (except hols)

"ATARI ST user requires help with programing the 68000. All levels of experience welcome and all letters answered. I also wish to hear from any clubes in the Manchester and surrounding areas. IN FACT, I wish to hear from all ST users!! Write to: Marcus Marshall, 23 Rudgwick Drive, Brandlesholme, Bury, Lancs. BL8 1YA.

Help me get a young Pen Pal around 10-15 years old for my Amstrad CPC464 He or she must be new to the computer with around 50 games. Phone Tony after 5pm on 01-944-1398.

For HELP on Dungeon Master, write with SAE to: K Williams, 1 Spring Gardens, Letterston, Mr Haverfordwest, Dyfed, Wales. SA62 5SH.

Help wanted with all aspects of programming basic, machine code, etc., for my Amiga. Also, how to make demos, and help and tips would be gratefully accepted for all Amiga games. If you can help me, please write to: 'Foz Mon', 11 Station Road, Hesketh Bank, Mr Preston, PR4 GSN, Lancashire.

For computer contacts from all over the world with you computer, get in touch with me and I will send you a list. Send details of your computer system together with your name, address and telephone number, and a stamped addressed envelope, as well as a separate first class stamp to: A F Stanley, 1 Merlin Close, Hainault, Ilford, Essex. IG6 3XL.

Atari ST owner needs latest version 'Virus Killer'. I will pay of swap some of my software for it (huge selevtion of both PD and original). Write to: Rich, 77 Aston Cantlow Road, Wilmcote, Mr Stratford-Upon-Avon, CV37 9XW with any form of help.

Amiga tips, cheats and hints. If you want to know more, send SAE for details to: Julian Smith, 45 Maplecroft Crescent, Sheffield, S9 1DN. I have cheats that cover the following games: Menace, Platoon, Wizball, Hybris, Better Dead than Alien, Elite, Arkanoid (UK Version), Speedball, Eliminator, Rocket Ranger, Roadblasters, Silkworm, Chuckie Egg 2, Gauntlet 2, Powerdrome, Populous, Milleniun 2.2, Scorpian, Afterburner, Pacmania, Pacland, Blood Money, Carrier Command, Double Dragon, Nevulus, Thunderblade, Flying Shark, Starglider, Bombuzal, Hostages, Super Hang On, International Karate +, Test Drive 1, Pipeline, Cosmic Pirate, Hoan of Arc, Battletech, Forgotten Worlds, Barbarian (PSYGNOSIS), Vigilante, Denaris, Space Harrier, The Real Ghostbusters, Cybernoid 2, Fernamdez must Die, Cybernoid 1, Empire Strikes Back, Fusion, Sword of Sogan, Ikari Warriors, Daley Thompson, Falcon, Voyager, Defender of the Crown, Goldrunner 1, Pacland, Lombard RAC Rally, Football Director 2, War in Middle Earth, Dragon's Lair, Insanity Fight, Operation Wolf, Last Duel, Xenon and R-Type.

ST Data Recovery. All types of disk recovery attempted, no success, no fee! Phone Greg Shackleford: 01-868-2489.

Write to Steve Hardy, 33 Fir Tree Drive, Wales, Sheffield, S31 8LZ if you want help with the following games (all C=64 unless otherwise stated): Dan Dare, Battle Tech (Amiga), Special Operations, Aliens (English and American version), The Great Escape, Freedom (Amiga), Spooks, Battle of Guadalcanal, Ikari Warriors (Amiga), Dark Empire, Software House, Battlehawks 1942 (Amiga), Arena, Power at Sea, Kampfgruppe (Amiga), Iwo Jima, Lords of Conquest, Uridium (Cheat - no reset switch required!!), Elite (Amiga - Cheat), Johnny Reb 2.

HELP, WANTED a computer with beach synthesiser or speach synthesiser for a blind young man in Sutton. Possibly an Amstrad 464 with colour monitor and games (-RE: Ad in August issue). Phone Sue on: 01-644 5594.
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C.V.'s? Get them RIGHT! Letter ditto details. SAE to: D Glass, 1 Wellbrae Court, New Elgin Moray. IV30 3EP.

USER GROUPS

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PENPALS

AMIGA: Penpals wanted from all over the world. Guaranteed reply. Write to: Stefan, PLK 011156 D, 2800 Brehem 1, W. Germany.

Amiga contacts wanted, anyone, anywhere. All latest stuff. 100% reply. Write to Tony, 112 Somerset Street, Hessle Road, Hull. HU3 3PH, or phone: 0482 704421. Guaranteed reply within 24 hours.

ST and Amiga contacts wanted, don't delay, write today. Guy Hood, 40 Fernside Avenue, Edinburgh. EG17 7DN.

Amiga contacts wanted all over the world. Write to Johan, Oudebaan 180, Biebeek 3040, Belgiun. Guaranteed reply to all! HONEST!

Amiga contacts wanted. Send list to Simon: 28 Carlton View, Leeds 7, West Yorks. LS7 1NS, or phne: (0523) 446995. All welcome.

C64 Owners contact me now!!! For the latest stuff write immediately to: Bob Manasieu, 5 Hoskin Avenue, Kidman Park, South Australia, 5025. Write now!! All letters replied.

C64 contacts wanted to swap latest stuff. Write now for immediate reply to: John Likos, 50 Caroline Drive, Fulham Gardens, South Australia 5024.

Amiga penpals wanted to exchange hints and tips. 100% reply. Write to: Steve, 12 Monet Court, Norwood, Waterford, Ieland.

For an Amstrad computer CPC 6128 penpals wanted. Write to: Jonathon Malachi, 8 South Parade, Bedford Park, Chiswick, London, W4. 101% reply.
Amiga penpals wanted to exchange hints and tips. 1000% reply!! Write to: Mark, 34 Berwick Crescent, Sidcup, Kent. DA15 8HR.

Amiga contacts wanted, send lists to: Tito and Alex, 6 Old Denny Road, Larbert, Falkirk. FK5 4JE.

PC OWNERS IN THE USA or elsewhere in America. Want penpals?! 100% fast reply. Others also welcome, but answer is not + guaranteed. Write to: Espen O Pederson, 3264 Lyngdal, Norway.

PC OWNERS. Want penpals, especially in the USA> Write to: Per Kristian Ostergaard, 3623 Lampeland, Norway.

Amiga contacts wanted reliable and fast. Write to Steve, 18 Water Street, Macclesfield, Cheshire. SK11 6PH.

ST Penpals wanted to exchange hints and tips. Contact Paul Corn at: 10 Raphoe Road, Crumlin, Ireland, Dublin 12, or phone him at: 01-556-6882.

Atari ST contacts wanted, write to: Bazil, 226 Derinton Road, Tooting, London, SW17 8HX or phone 01-682-2007.

New ST owner needs help, advice etc. Write: Mary Hamlyn, 37 Sedgeley Grove, Elson, Gosport, Hants.

Atari ST contacts wanted. Write to: Paul Holloway, 22 Ladycroft Close, Radbrook, Shrewsbury. SY3 9BB.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap hints etc. Please get in contact with Steve: 12 Monet Court, Norwood, Waterford, Ireland.

Amiga contacts wanted to swap hints, tips etc. Write to: Brendan Carty, 150 Brook Ville Park, Droghena, Co. Louth, Eire.

Amiga contacts, no beginners, Stuart, 6 Angel Street, Baildom, Shipley, W Yorks. BD17 6NB. Phone: (0274) 585608.
Amiga PD software club! Send SAE for details and list to AM-AM PD, 23 Penmead Road, Delabole, Cornwall, PL33 9AP.

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The BLITTER END

JACK INTO THAT BOOM BOX, MIKE

We've heard of subliminal advertising, but this is ridiculous. The little thingy – sorry, BIG thingy – pictured above is the DynaMike. According to the press release, the DynaMike '...lets you do really funny things with your voice.' It also '....comes with a special jack so you can use it with a boom box.' What really convinced us, however, was the promise that with the DynaMike we could '...sound like Michael Jackson when he hits a high note.' Wouldn't you be hitting the high notes with something like that? We practically went through the roof...

*

Blitter will not be appearing in his usual spot next month. He will instead by retiring gracefully to the Bahamas. The reason? By next month, he will be stinking rich, thanks to a program from MPH of Norwich. The item in question is the '...official computer version of the newly released Greyhound Calculator. This program works out how fast each dog is...and calculates the final result of the race. It shall retail at £34.95 which, considering how accurate it is, is a very cheap price.' Sounded rather pricey to us, until we were told that 'In one test, starting off with just £5, we made nearly £500.' Blitter has ordered six copies and is eagerly expecting six winners in every race, with £5 on each dog. See you on the breach, coconuts...

Nothing succeeds like success. This month we were profoundly moved by the tributes inspired by Monte Carlo Casino – a budget title from Codemasters. The cassette inlay features a testimonial that declares: 'This is probably the most realistic, most playable casino game ever – it's absolutely brilliant!!' The testimonial is credited to one David Darling, who is a director of...Codemasters. Perhaps they should take out a license on MPH's *Greyhound Calculator*.

*

And talking of budget labels, we've just come across one of the lowest budget freebies ever. The RAD label features the company's logo in blistering primary colours on the reverse of the cassette inlay. Beneath the logo, in tiny print, reads the immortal message: 'Create your own RADical badge! Cut around the above and stick a safety pin to the back of this card using sticky tape.' Sales are booming...

*

Soccer stars are laughing all the way to the bank these days, thanks to over-enthusiastic software companies. Screen 7 recently announced proudly that it had signed up Vinnie Jones of Leeds United and that it would be launching the *Vinnie Jones Soccer Spectacular* in November of this year. This is a revolutionary marketing approach. It comes very, very hot on the heels of Handball Maradona, Manchester United, Liverpool FC, Gary Lineker, 'Gazza' Gascoigne, Kenny Dalglish, and Emlyn Hughes, to name a..er..few. Attention Screen 7: this horse has not just bolted, it has now passed into myth and legend. No more balls, PLEASE...

*

THE ACE CHALLENGE!

Find out more about the ACE Challenge on page 12 – whatever others might say, we're putting our money where our mouth is!

We're also determined to carry on the ACE tradition by giving you a magazine that respects your burning obsession with the best things in life – so tell us more about yourself on page 86 – and maybe win a prize into the bargain!

Blitter would like to welcome some new hands to the ACE Team. You'll be getting to know these guys very well over the next few months, so we felt it only right to give you an introduction so you know what you're letting yourself in for.

Taking the Deputy Editor's chair is Rik Haynes, previously Reviews Editor on New Computer Express. Rik celebrated his appointment by immediately leaving for Disneyland and investigating the technology behind the rides there – and you can find out more about his experiences next month.

Bringing his acute game judgement to bear on new releases from now on will be Laurence Scotford. Laurence had to make a tough decision: should he follow the family business, or should he play *R-Type*. The family business, perhaps we should mention, is embalming. Say no more, except that Laurence has put in more hours on computer games across more machines than most people, which given the alternative is hardly surprising.

You're going to see a big change in the way the magazine looks over the next few months as Design Editor Jim Willis gets to grips with the advanced technology we use to produce the magazine. A new set of pencils have been ordered, and the man came last week to ink the transpositories. Jim has an unhealthy addiction to the PC Engine ...and he supports Everton.

Finally, Riyad Emeran joins our crew of regular contributors. Riyad's speciality is console technology – at home he has, amongst other things, a PC Engine plus CD ROM, Megadrive, Nintendo and a host of other surprises. We're so jealous that we won't tell you anything else about him...

Blit-blit!

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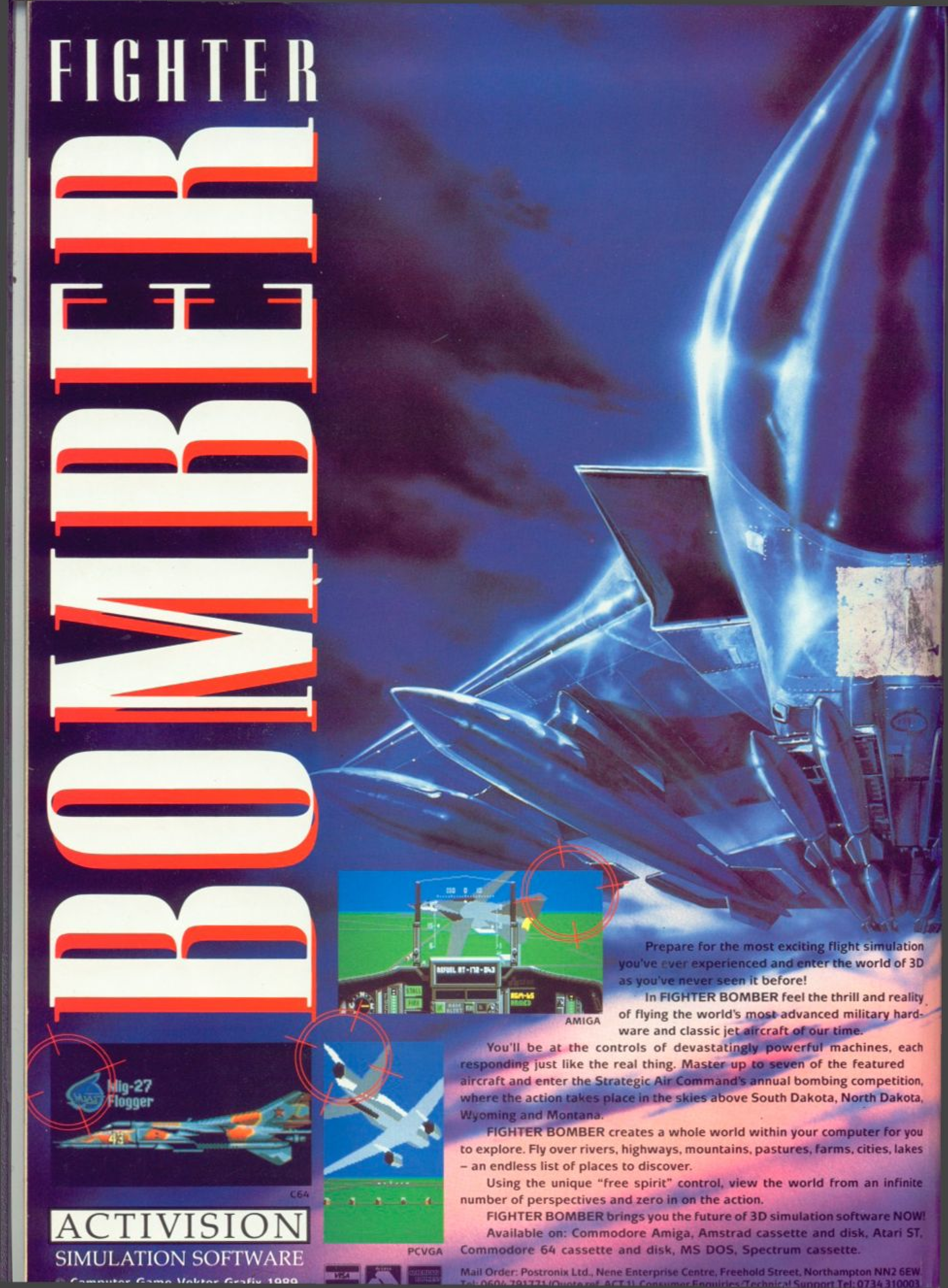

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